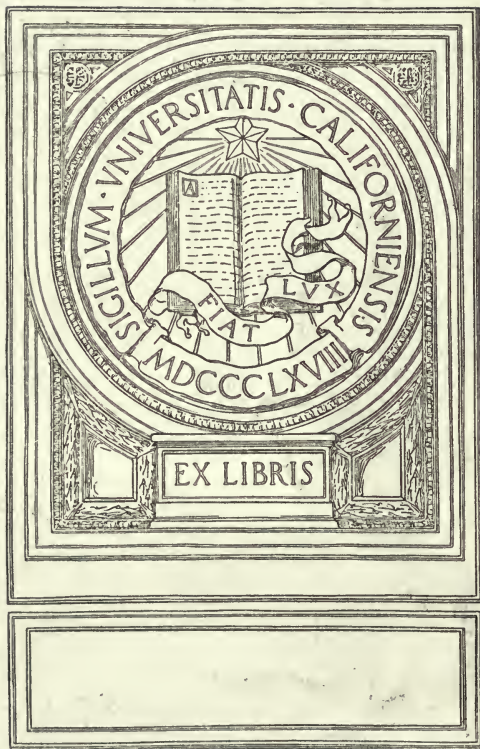


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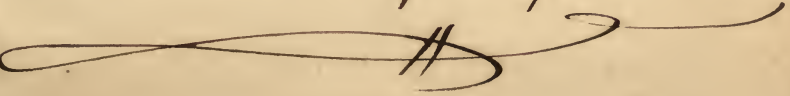


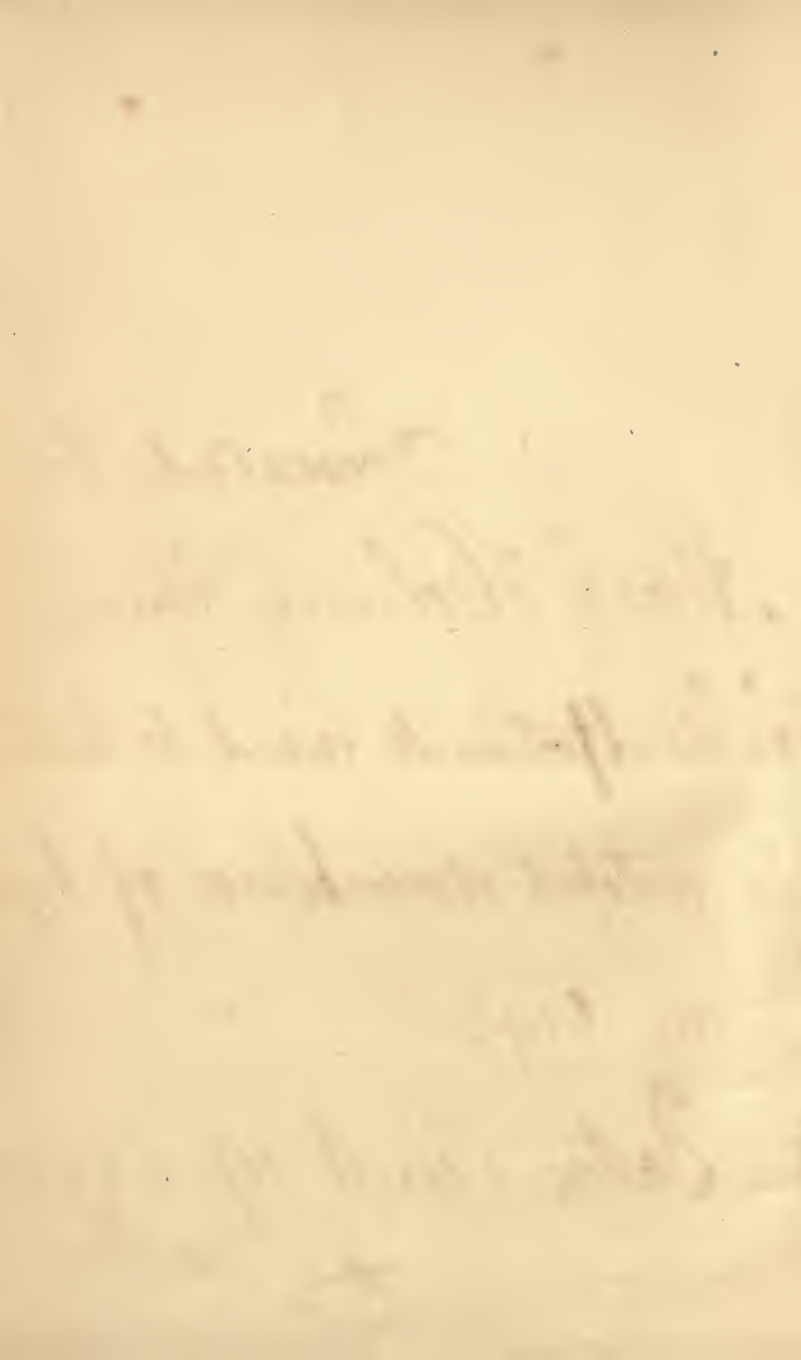




Presented to
Abraham Holway Esqr.
by his affectionate friend the Author,
in grateful remembrance of bye
gone days—

Boston Augt. 19-1882





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FRANK GRAHAM (from an old daguerreotype).

THE LAND OF GOLD.

A TALE OF '49.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF EARLY PIONEER LIFE IN
CALIFORNIA, AND FOUNDED
UPON FACT.

DEDICATED TO CALIFORNIA PIONEERS.

BY

GEORGE G. SPURR.

WITH SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS.



BOSTON:
A. WILLIAMS & COMPANY,
OLD CORNER BOOKSTORE,
1881.

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By GEORGE G. SPURR.

TO MR. J. M. W. B. L. C.

The Riverside Press, Cambridge:
Stereotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.

P52901
S6L3
1881
MAIN

To
THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS,
WHO SUFFERED WITH MANLY ENDURANCE
HARDSHIPS RARELY KNOWN TO THE PRESENT CENTURY,
AND BRAVELY LED THE VAN OF CIVILIZATION
OVER OBSTACLES WHICH MADE THEIR DEEDS IMPERISHABLE ON THE SCROLL OF FAME;
AND WHO IN OPENING THIS WILD AND MAGNIFICENT COUNTRY
TO ITS PRESENT GRAND POSSIBILITIES
HAVE CARVED UPON THE ANNALS OF POETIC FANCY
AN INDIVIDUALITY AS MARKED AS IT IS CHARACTERISTIC AND DRAMATIC,
These Memoirs
ARE SINCERELY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

M138257

PREFACE.

THIS narrative, presented with many misgivings as to its acceptance by the general reader, and written during an illness of some months' duration, is contributed to the file of literature for the purpose of keeping green the memory of the achievements of the early pioneers in California, and to show future generations what it cost to add what was once a wild and unbroken solitude to civilization and fame.

In reviving scenes long since forgotten and reproducing characters buried in eternal sleep, I am actuated by a desire to commemorate their deeds and to leave to their posterity a memorial, humble as it is, in respectful remembrance, to the bravery and persistent endurance which marked their tracks through the wildest regions of the Sierra Nevadas.

Possibly some errors have crept in, and no doubt many imperfections may be found; these must necessarily follow a memory unaided by notes, maps, or

references, in its efforts to recall events which transpired full thirty years ago.

These blemishes are the natural outgrowth of an imperfect knowledge of that vast country to which I have been a stranger during the intervening years, and the critic is asked to be charitable and accept these defects as the condition accompanying the legacy bequeathed to him by the author.

G. G. S.

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A WINTER EVENING'S TALE.

CHAPTER I.

THE LOVE OF MONEY.

AWAKE, my lyre; awake once more;
Transport me back to days of yore;
Beguile the heart, enchant the mind,
And sing, ah sing, of auld lang syne.
Conceal these locks as white as snow,
My failing sight and wrinkled brow
Let me forget; the hand of time
Has long since bent this form of mine.
Benumb these pains, exhaust these tears,
And dim the list of ripened years:
Arouse companions, long since dead,
In valley deep and river bed,
On dreary waste, upon the plain
Where vultures gorged the mangled slain;
Restore the camp with tale and song,
The wolf that howled the whole night long,
The pack mule and the winding trails
Up mountain steeps, through grassy vales;
Revive these scenes, for I would fain
Live o'er these blessed scenes again,—
Give, oh give me one chance more
To live and love in days of yore.

THE AUTHOR.

OF all the passions to which man is heir, there is none, perhaps, more seductive than the love of wealth. The desire to become rich is a moral weakness, which did not originate in our day, nor can we

be held responsible for this irresistible feeling. To desire money, or to accumulate it by the use of proper means, is not wrong. It is only when we allow our baser appetites to become the supreme dictator over the better instincts of our nature, and grant our avaricious cravings unrestrained liberty, that it becomes a sin. The history of human greed presents to us but few marked examples of self-denial. It seems as though this inherent weakness has become so embedded in the character of man, that it will always exist, in some degree, to aid a miserly heart in oppressing the needy and crushing the honest poor.

To obtain money, and thereby position and influence, is one of the strongest incentives of our moral being. I not only sustain but applaud the man who is honestly struggling against an adverse wind and tide to gain an honorable landing from the surging of a wild and tempestuous sea. Who does not love the man of energy and boldness, whether he be found in our legislative halls, or wielding the mighty pen in the silent gloom of his obscure sanctum. What reader, following the Arctic wanderers through fearful scenes, has not felt his heart beat with emotion while reading of the fate of their little bark as it weathered the frozen blasts that hurled it through the regions of eternal snow. Where is the patriot who loves not Italy's greatest hero, who from

his Alpine home sounded his bugle horn, and swinging his battle-axe over the dynasty of a tyrant king, raised his struggling country to a position among the nations of the earth. Is there an American citizen who loves not the Father of his Country, who, crossing the Delaware, amid the howling blasts of winter's midnight gloom, struck a blow that felled to earth the banner which mocked the prayers of a pure and injured people. What freeman does not regard with affection the Liberator of his country, who amid the chaos of public opinion, surrounded by the darkest clouds of military disaster, hurled in the teeth of his country's foes his Proclamation of Emancipation, and raised four millions of slaves to breathe the pure air of republican liberty.

What modern pioneer has followed the intrepid Pathfinder over the barren plains of the far West and read of his perilous journeys over the lofty summits of the Sierra Nevada, and through the silent gloom of the Sacramento Valley, without a feeling of awe and deep admiration. He little dreamed, while wandering over that vast region of solemn grandeur, that in a few years the woodman's axe would ring amid those wild and solitary hills. He never imagined that in the bosoms of those gurgling brooks and mighty rivers, in hill and dale and forest wild, lay hid the gathered wealth of countless years, or that cities would rise where all was gloom, that

steamboats would glide and the iron horse rush through those silent valleys.

Not only this, but far greater results have been obtained. Those timbered hills and luxuriant valleys, over which the white man's foot had never trod, while the deer, the antelope, and the elk, roamed about in their native majesty, are filled with people from every clime. Those vast and parching prairies, where cattle and horses roamed countless and unclaimed, furnish to-day fruits, grain, and vegetables for exportation. On those mighty rivers whose banks are covered with bright homes and richly cultivated fields, vessels of every nation spread their canvas to the breeze. Along the beautiful and fertile valley of the Sacramento, three hundred miles long and eighty miles wide, where wild flowers blossomed, and luxurious clover and golden grain withered and died, can be seen to-day the thrifty farm, the home of plenty, and the hearty welcome in the tawny faces of those hardy sons of New England. The petty settlements of canvas huts and willow cabins have given way to mighty cities; the iron horse shrieks through her valleys; the lightning whispers from city to city; her young heart beats in unison with ours, and California stands to-day the queen of the Pacific, the paradise of America, and the wonder of the world.

As one of the earliest of her adopted children, I

bless her to-day for the stand she took in the darkest hour of our country's history. Though her faults are many, and her crimes great, she has fully redeemed herself; for when her country's emblem — that proud bird of America — pierced by arrows of usurpers, frightened from its stately eyrie, screeching and fluttering above the tottering capitol, descended amid the awful gloom and took refuge in the hearts of her people, the voice of the old pioneers rose above the lofty summits of her snow-clad mountains, and rang forth throughout the land — *Union now — Union forever and forever!*

California's greatness and those bright and happy results were not accomplished without great sacrifices and personal dangers. Many a poor emigrant lost his life *en route* to this land of promise, many sweet homes were made desolate, and hundreds of stout hearts sank under the weight of grief and disappointment. Collect the dust of those who perished from hunger and thirst on the blighted prairies of the far West; gather those mangled forms that breathed their last under the vengeance of the Indian's tomahawk; pick up those frightful corpses, which glistened in the moon-beams on the snow-clad summits of the Sierra Nevada; glean the remnants that lay bleaching in the noonday sun, — gather them together — lay them gently along from the banks of the turbid Missouri to the drowsy Sacra-

mento, and the emigrant of to-day can pass over an endless grave for twenty-two hundred miles, — a tomb to which no State in the Union but has contributed some loving heart of blessed memory, — a burial ground over which the tears of the widow and fatherless mingle with the requiem of the summer winds and the churly blasts of December's gale.

It will be my humble endeavor to narrate to you, reader, a few of the leading incidents in the experience of one of the early pioneers in the land of sunshine and flowers. I shall try to picture a once happy home, and to contrast with it one now desolate and unknown. I hope to impress upon you that a home, however humble, is the dearest spot on earth; and to persuade you that a rolling stone gathers no moss, and that a contented mind is a continual feast.

CHAPTER II.

THE COTTAGE HOME IN THE MOHAWK VALLEY.

" I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn :
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor made too long a day ;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away."

Hood.

ON the bank of the Mohawk, whose turbid waters sweep slowly and silently through the county of Oneida, once stood a neat little cottage of a romantic appearance. The trellised portico and latticed windows were draped with ivy and jasmine in such a manner as to puzzle the observer and excite his curiosity. He would look, smile, and with unconscious sincerity seldom retire till he had made a thorough inspection of its unique and singular oddity. Adjoining this cottage was a highly cultivated garden, laid out with graveled walks and woodbine bowers. A sprightly brook which ran down the side of a steep and rocky hill forming the background of our picture, wound through the centre of the garden, and its playful tune could be heard as it rippled over its pebbly bed. The green hills, the tangled

wildwood, the village and the village church, the silent Mohawk, and the surrounding scenery, presented to the visitor a most charming sight, and left upon his mind an impression never to be forgotten.

The external appearance so prepossessing and cozy, persuaded the beholder that similar beauties and corresponding attractions were to be enjoyed within the cottage home. Enter with me through the eastern door and you encounter Major, the faithful dog, who politely demands your business. As your pass is genuine you are truly welcome, the dog manifesting his gladness in various ways ; but woe unto him who attempts to enter unaided and alone. Pass through the different rooms and you observe nothing but the articles usually owned by persons in moderate circumstances, unless you except a well filled library case and a few choice paintings. But that which is the most noticeable is the peculiar neatness and the air of comfort that pervades every department, especially the kitchen, which evidently is arranged after the English fashion, for here is the open hearth with its blazing fire ; the polished grate and fender with poker and tongs ; the old arm-chair, where pussy so often sleeps ; the richly colored rug on which the black dog yawns ; "the white-washed walls, the neatly sanded floor, and the oaken clock which ticked behind the door."

This unique little home with its pleasant surroundings was owned by Mr. James Graham, and occupied by himself, his wife, and five children, two sons and three daughters. Mr. Graham was an intelligent man of dignified appearance, proud and self-willed, and extremely sensitive. He had built this home many years ago, and embellished it to suit his tastes and fancy. He had christened it Fernwood Cottage. Mrs. Graham was a pure Christian woman of unassuming manners, a firm friend, and a devoted mother. She was deeply attached to her family and her beautiful little home that nestled so prettily in the deep calmness of the Mohawk Valley.

When in the fall of 1848 the news from California reached us, it threw the whole country into a state of wild excitement. Mr. Graham fell an easy prey to the gold fever, became a firm believer in the marvelous discoveries of hidden treasures, and determined to take an early start for the new Eldorado. His home, his social relations, the tears of his children, the pleadings of his wife, failed to shake his purpose, or change the time of his departure. That little home, so precious to every member of the family, was easily mortgaged. The necessary arrangements were soon completed, and Mr. Graham, with a heart buoyant with hope, bade farewell to his family, and quietly left the village for New York.

On arriving at the great metropolis he found thousands there before him pressing for conveyance to the land that was said to flow with milk and honey. The hotels were filled, the streets thronged, and the stores crowded with these adventurous spirits arranging the details for a speedy departure for California. The doubts which Mr. Graham had entertained with reference to the propriety of taking with him his eldest son, Frank, were now dispelled. Their fortunes were inseparable ; their houses must rise or fall together. Sharing each other's joys or sorrows, they must go hand in hand, and survive or perish in this the grandest hazard of their lives. Mr. Graham wrote a long letter to his family, giving a glowing account of ships sailing daily, loaded with enthusiastic passengers for the gold mines. He urged Frank to come immediately, and with him to take his chances by embarking on the next ship that sailed. He posted this letter and returned to his hotel to await a reply.

CHAPTER III.

THE RUGBYS OF RUGBY FARM.

"New hopes may bloom, and days may come
Of milder, calmer beam,
But there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream."

LEADING from the hollow in which Mr. Graham's homestead nestles is a bridle path, which, if followed, brings you abruptly into a broad county road stretching back among the farms which dot the valley on either side of the river.

The scene from Rugby Hill, the most prominent of the long range that lies to the east of the road, is, indeed, beautiful and picturesque. Standing upon the "tip" on a clear summer's day, far off to the right can be seen the outlines of that busy little municipality—the city of Rome. Reversing your position, your eyes rest upon and penetrate the thin vapor that hangs like a bridal veil over the queen city of the Mohawk Valley—the city of Utica. Nothing can be more charming to the visitor as he sits in the shade of the beech-trees that skirt the winding slopes, and watches the drowsy Mohawk as it wends its way with sleepy stillness through cultivated fields and thrifty villages.

Following the old turnpike for a short distance, you reach an old-fashioned brick house, standing parallel with the road and deeply shaded by sugar maples. You notice several large barns and other buildings, and on either side of the road long rows of wood piled up ready for market. Flocks of sheep are grazing and fat cattle are browsing in the meadows and upon the adjoining hills. Crossing the bridge which spans the brook, you see long rows of polished milk-pans shining as bright as the sun that strikes them at noonday. If you take the trouble to walk up to the dairy door, and ask for a drink of water, it will be something unusual if you are not soon seated at the table and rewarded with some delicious milk and a plate of home-made bread and cheese. Such is Rugby Farm.

It was Thanksgiving week, and Philip Rugby was returning home from the village, where he had left the usual amount of poultry for sale for the holidays. On arriving at the barn, in the rear of his father's house, he tossed the reins to the chore-boy and hastily entered his mother's kitchen. A bright, cheerful fire, half the width of the room, threw its ruddy glow far over the tea-table laden with buttered toast and smoking hot biscuit, white as the snow-flakes on Philip's coat. Handing his mother a bundle of knickknacks, purchased at the village store, and tossing some letters and papers upon his

father's desk, he hung his cap and overcoat upon a peg behind the door, and quietly took his seat at the table.

There was something about Philip's manner and expression that attracted his mother's attention — a sort of hidden joy which seemed too good to keep, and simply awaited a favorable opportunity to take the family by surprise.

"Let me thank you, Philip, for the bundle you brought me from Mrs. Hathaway's," began his mother, "but where are the shoes you were to bring me from Dobson's?"

"Why, really, mother, I forgot to call for them. It got to be quite late, and the snow was falling so fast, that I came off and left them; but I shall have to go down again Saturday, and I won't disappoint you a second time."

"Well, where are my earrings and music?" inquired his sister Jane. "I hope you have not forgotten them also."

"I certainly have," replied her brother, running his fingers through his long black hair. "The fact of the matter is just this: I stayed so long at the post-office, listening to the news from the gold regions, that I only wonder I did not start for that land of promise instead of coming home."

"Oh dear, Philip, don't say another word about that fairy-land, of which no one seems to know its

position or to whom it belongs," interposed his mother warmly. "I had rather follow you to the grave, than see you go to that land of delusion, instead of promise, as you are pleased to call it."

"Yes," broke in the Squire, "let us hope you are too well balanced to allow the fever to seize you, as it has the Humphreys. This California excitement, in my judgment, is a decoy, used by the merchants, who have more ships than freights, and the birds caught by such chaff will find the new Eldorado, if they ever reach it, to be a country of fraud, a wicked snare to deceive the people, and to make money."

"Perhaps so, father, and yet many of our best families are preparing to go."

"Very true, Phil. Many will go, but, in my opinion, few will return. I confess to you here, that nothing would destroy my peace of mind quicker than to see you yielding to the influence of this Arabian Nights' dream about this land of enchantment. For I assure you it will prove, in the end, a land of humbug — a land of death."

"Well, father, I have a bit of strange news to tell you."

"Indeed! pray, what is it?"

"Why, sir, old Graham has gone to New York, *en route* to this 'land of death,' as you call it, and the whole village is in a state of wild excitement over the event."

"Dear me, what nonsense!" ejaculated the Squire. "Nothing could have surprised me more," added his father, as he looked up to his wife in painful astonishment.

"Poor Mrs. Graham! what will become of her and the children?" suggested Mrs. Rugby, as her eyes rested upon her daughter Jane, who sat a mute listener to this strange and unexpected conversation.

"He has," continued Philip, "quietly matured his plans, mortgaged his place heavily, and stepped out of town without bidding good-by, even to his nearest neighbors and friends. When his son Frank follows him, let us fervently hope he will manifest a similar spirit of forbearance."

"Are we to understand by that, Philip," inquired his father, visibly affected, "that Frank is to accompany him in this strange adventure?"

"Yes, sir. I heard him read a letter, which he had received from his father, before all the folks in the post-office, and he there expressed his determination to leave at once; and I ask your permission to express the hope that nothing will occur to change or modify his resolution."

Jane Rugby looked up into her brother's face, at the conclusion of his last remark, with an expression of astonishment and alarm. Astonished at the suddenness of this painful intelligence, and

alarmed at the earnestness of her brother's studied insult. The timid blush that had suffused her cheeks at the mention of young Graham's name was superseded by an ashy whiteness which betrayed the emotions of her troubled heart. The tears gathered thick and fast over her beautiful hazel eyes, and as they rolled down her face, so perfectly formed and yet so pitiful, aroused her mother's love. With a voice sharp and full of meaning she cried, "Philip, this is indeed cruel and unmanly." The spiteful suggestions offered in the presence of the family had wounded deeply and forever that pure, innocent girl. The struggle to remain firm was a failure — the tears increased, the lips quivered, the hands went up, and with one deep distressing sob she arose from the table and abruptly left the room.

It was customary in those days for the farmers' daughters in that vicinity to give social parties during the winter, and to invite such young people to their paring-bees as pleased their fancy. The year before the characters of this story were introduced to our readers, there had been one of these peculiar but happy gatherings at Rugby Farm, and among the number of young gentlemen that had accepted Miss Rugby's invitation was Frank Graham, a medical student, home on a brief vacation to spend the holidays with his parents. He was a young man of

good address and pleasing manners, full of frolic, and loved dearly a good time. During the evening he introduced some new plays; he showed such judgment in the choice of characters, and infused such a spirit of enthusiasm into the arrangements of the pieces, that Jane Rugby's party was acknowledged the most successful of the season. The whole assembly was delighted with the novelties introduced, and charmed with the happy manner in which they were carried out. As the company was about to break up, Miss Rugby took occasion to thank young Graham for the assistance so unexpectedly rendered in aiding her to entertain her friends. As she spoke, she playfully pinned a rosebud to the lapel of his coat, and followed him to the door that led out under the sugar maples stripped of their foliage. He threw the folds of his cloak about her unprotected shoulders as she assured him his visits would ever be welcomed at Rugby Farm. The moon was fast sinking behind the headland that formed the "Big-bend" in the Mohawk River. The horses and driver were impatient at the delay, while the girls wondered what kept the young "doctor" so long at the gate. And yet he lingered, because it seemed to be the desire of each. He was pleased — she more than pleased, she was happy. As she put her little hand in his, and drew closer to him,

her heart unconsciously went out from her never to return.

It was many hours after Jane had retired ere she closed her eyes in sleep. The vision she saw in the gray of that November morn was the brightest of her whole life. It was a vision such as never appeared to her before ; it was such a vision as never appeared to her again ; it was God's holiest gift to the human heart, the first touch of love's young dream.

Squire Rugby was a well-to-do farmer, a director in the Mohawk Valley Bank, and a highly respected man. Mr. Graham was superintendent of Littleton Mills, with a stipulated income, and equally respected. The Squire, in his official capacity, had rejected Graham's paper at the bank from a mistaken sense of duty. Mr. Graham, smarting under the fancied wrong, retaliated by refusing to purchase wood and wool from the Rugbys. Philip felt the most sorely grieved, because it drove him to distant markets to dispose of their goods, thus causing inconvenience and expense. There existed, therefore, at the commencement of our tale, a coolness between the heads of these two families, and it needed but some slight cause to separate them entirely.

Thus matters stood when Frank Graham called at Rugby Farm to ask permission to visit their

daughter. He was received with freezing politeness by the Squire, who, without the slightest interruption, listened feelingly to his petition. The Squire then assured him that his family must feel highly honored for this mark of his esteem, yet he was sorry he could not consent to his gentlemanly proposition. The Squire tried to impress upon him the belief that there were no special objections to him as a man; but in the character of an avowed suitor for his daughter, it would be inconsistent with the feelings of the family, and that the subject must be forever dismissed. Oh, no; he must not see Jane. It was unnecessary, and the Squire must use his parental authority even to deny Graham that "small favor." "You, sir," suggested the Squire warmly, "are a young man of undoubted abilities, and if they are zealously directed in the profession you have chosen, I bespeak for you a brilliant career. Life is before you, and the future will fully compensate you for such a trifling loss. Good night, sir, I hope you will reach home safely before the storm bursts. It seems near and threatening." And thus the interview ended.

This led to secret correspondence and intercepted letters, which were burnt unopened in the presence of the family. Then came clandestine meetings upon Rugby Hill—not many it is true, but just sufficient to fan this smoldering fire into an immense conflagration.

Philip Rugby thought that if he prevented an interview between his sister Jane and Frank, now about to start for California, this silly school-girl love would be crushed in the bud, and in a few months the young "doctor" would be remembered only as a thing of the past.

A few days after this episode occurred in Mrs. Rugby's kitchen, Frank Graham left his home for Rugby Farm. He took the bridle path through the woods, and after a smart walk reached the turnpike that ran parallel with the Mohawk River. It was a cold winter night, the keen air bit sharply, and the light early snow falling from the trees and blowing into his face caused him to experience all the bitterness of a blinding snow-storm. As he walked briskly up the road, there seemed an ominous silence around and about him. The darkness and the moaning of the wind caused his mind to fill with painful forebodings. The question uppermost in his mind was relative to his reception at Squire Rugby's. Would the visit, the most trying one of his life, be met with cold indifference, or would it terminate in friendly reconciliation. Would his constancy and love be rewarded with hearty greetings, or would he be driven from the door. These and similar feelings preyed upon his mind as his eyes rested upon the lights shining through the windows of the Rugby mansion.

Frank Graham was a student struggling for a profession, dependent upon his father's will and means, and deeply attached to Jane Rugby. He was to leave the next day for New York, there to meet his father and to accompany him in his perilous enterprise. The dangers they must face, the hardships they must endure, were nothing compared to the loss of this beautiful girl, who had become the queen of his heart and the idol of his soul.

Far back in the previous spring he had been respectfully forbidden to visit Rugby Farm, where his most sacred feelings had been treated with ridicule and scorn. Now what could he expect but a cold and icy welcome. With courage equal to the occasion he passed under the sugar maples on to the portico where he had stood one year before. Yes, right there he had tenderly covered that slender form and drawn that sweet little face to his, looked down into those beautiful hazel eyes, and drank in the holy influence which came up through them from her pure and guileless heart. The family were all at home, seated, and engaged in varied occupations around their broad kitchen fire. The sharp ring of the door-bell resounded throughout the house. Philip Rugby arose and answered it at once. Grasping the half closed door with one hand, and holding a lamp over his head, he desired to know Frank's business. "I wish to see your father, sir,"

replied Frank, stepping inside the hall without being asked, and without hesitation walked proudly into the adjoining room.

There was mischief in that reply which Philip Rugby dared not encounter alone, so leaving the lamp upon the table he strode into the kitchen and announced the visitor's name to his father.

Squire Rugby, with a dark frown upon his face, looked quickly up from his paper, and turned his eyes hurriedly round the room, until they rested upon his daughter Jane. Whispering a few words to Philip and giving a peremptory order for Jane to go immediately to her room, he tossed his paper upon the table with an angry gesture, and told his son to follow him with the horse-whip.

"So, sir," began the Squire, straightening himself almost to the ceiling, and looking down upon young Graham with commanding superiority,— "So, sir, you are the young gentleman who came here last spring to seek the hand of my daughter, and because you were refused, resorted to deception, and decoyed my child into the woods and taught her to disobey her parents."

"I deny nothing," meekly replied Frank, "not even my unquenchable love for Jane, which has gone beyond my power to control."

"So it would seem," retorted the Squire, sneeringly, and then added: "You have come a long way

to get a good flogging. Well, you could not have selected a healthier night or a more befitting occasion."

"Indeed, sir, I have come for nothing of the kind," answered Frank, as Philip entered the room with the long-handled whip in his hand. "It is the last place on earth," added Graham, "where I should expect to receive either insult or barbarous treatment."

"You deserve both, sir," chimed in Philip, "and it shall not be my fault if you don't get enough to last you as long as you live."

"I appeal to you, Squire Rugby, as a man of honor, to listen to my request, and to omit these indignities. I leave for California to-morrow, sir," continued Frank, solemnly, "and I came here to beseech you to permit me a brief interview with your daughter. Surely, sir, on the eve of my departure you cannot refuse me such a privilege; it may be a final meeting."

"I shall refuse you everything but the right to leave this house immediately," answered the Squire, "and your instant exit will confirm the judgment I have hitherto entertained of your ability to foresee coming danger."

"Then, sir," demanded Graham, "you positively refuse me this favor?"

"Yes, sir, I do," replied the Squire, stepping back

and grasping the whipstock, "and I am strongly tempted to hasten your departure with something which will prevent your ever coming here again."

"Spare yourself the trouble and your house the shame such treatment would bring upon it. I will leave at once."

Jane Rugby having been dismissed from the kitchen, and ordered to her room, obeyed. But the moment she had recovered from the shock, she began to devise means by which she might give Graham a casket she had prepared for him should she fail, like him, to bring about an interview. The great crisis of her life had come, and it was impossible for her to resist the promptings of her own heart. Hastily covering herself with a heavy quilt, she stepped out through the window over the front door, and steadying herself by clinging to the old grape-vine, she reached the shelving of the portico in safety. Here, shivering and benumbed with cold, she sat awaiting his coming.

The door had scarcely closed upon young Graham when he was attracted by a peculiar sound apparently coming from the top of the trees which overhung the roof of the house. The jar of the door bolt had died away, and the lights had disappeared from the sitting-room. Again this low, stifled cry came down through the freezing night air. Surely that name was his. He could not be mistaken

He stood riveted to the spot, listening in breathless silence. His eyes had now become accustomed to the darkness, and straining them to their utmost, he fancied he saw the outlines of a human form standing upon the shelving of the portico. Bounding back with the spring of an antelope, his heart throbbing with suppressed joy, he peered through the increased darkness, and beheld with startled wonder his devoted queen, Jane Rugby. "God bless you, darling, for this proof of your love for me. Tell me quickly how I can reach you, for I must kiss you good-by, though I perish for it the next moment."

"Speak low, Frank dear, or we shall be discovered. Climb the second tree to your left, follow the third limb, and it will bring you within a few feet of where I am. Be careful of yourself, dear, and don't make any noise." This Graham accomplished, and on reaching the end of the limb sprang upon the shelving, and catching Jane in his arms kissed her with fervency and love.

Time was too precious, however, to waste in useless repining, the fear of detection too imminent to prolong the interview beyond the interchange of mutual vows and farewells, and the night air too cold to peril the joy of his life. This stolen interview, which, perhaps, was to be their last in this life; this blessed meeting, upon which the very essence

of the future depended ; this grateful opportunity, which had been so auspiciously granted to them, must be consecrated to the great aim of their lives — to meet again.

This, then, was a purely business meeting, and, like all such meetings, was brief and to the point. Tears had to be suppressed, the anguish of the soul smothered, and the tenderest emotions of the heart allowed to die upon the lips. "Take this box, Frank dear. It contains a few articles which will be useful to you in the country which I trust you will reach in safety. Let me hope it will remind you of the giver. In it you will also find a letter more expressive than wise, perhaps. I feared I should not get the opportunity to tell you how dear you are to me. Besides, you will find a ring, the emblem of my plighted love to you. Keep it as a talisman, and return it to me when your love for me is dead. Last, but not least, is the picture of your affianced wife. Frank, darling, I have suffered for you so much ; I must continue to suffer for your sake. This suffering is the price I pay for my undying love for you. Promise me, darling, before God, in whose presence we stand to-night, you will be faithful and come again to me."

"I do promise you, Jane, most solemnly. Aye, I swear by my sainted mother, who, in my eyes, embodies all the perfections of nature, to do all you

could wish of me. I could not do otherwise — because I seem to have absorbed you spiritually. You have become absolutely essential to my existence. We are utterly inseparable, and I love you with all the strength of my heart.”

“Hush, Frank — see those lights — they are moving about the house — I am missed. Oh, merciful Father, can I let you go.”

“One word more, Jane, and then farewell. Go to my mother in your distress ; you can expect no sympathy from your own. She will, for my sake, comfort you, and prove your friend in need. There is a package for you, left in her care, and it contains similar gifts to those you have just given to me. Promise me here, darling, before God — that you will never marry until you receive back your talisman, or are assured that I am dead.”

“Let us make that pledge mutual, my poor dear boy, and seal it.”

Thus standing upon the shelving of the portico, shivering in a biting northwest wind on a cold winter night, they mutually sealed their vows of eternal constancy and separated. It was, however, a forcible separation, and the consequences came very near being disastrous. For Jane had barely reached her room, when Frank, becoming alarmed for his own safety, sprang out from the shelving and caught the first limb in his fall. The sudden and increased

weight tore the branch from the tree, and both Graham and the limb went down to the ground with a crash. Before he could recover from the shock, or even disentangle himself from the ensnarled twigs, the Squire had reached the front-door with a hand-lamp, and Philip was seen with a lantern hurrying from the driveway to the road. Graham crawled out as best he could, and took refuge behind a row of cord-wood. Finding there was no escape, he seized a catstick, and struck the lantern with such force as to send it whirling across the field. Squire Rugby hurried into his library for his shot-gun, and Philip ran to the barn to loosen the dog. But before either returned Graham had reached the bridle path and was soon under the protection of his own roof.

The day had now arrived when Frank Graham was to leave home, and launch out into the great sea of life. It was a cold December morning, the fitful wind drifted the snow into vast heaps, which loomed up, like monuments, to the obscured sun. The deep forest moaned and sighed ; the tree-tops bowed in obedience to the storm ; the young cow lowed for lack of care ; while the black dog whined with up-turned eyes, and laid his troubled head upon the knees of his mistress.

The echo of the bugle's tone denoted the arrival of the stage, and startled the family from an un-

happy reverie, while the approaching bells awakened the pangs of separation. The warm embrace, the tender kiss, the heart's deepest emotions, the blessings and good-byes were uttered, and the "All aboard" closed the scene.

Frank turned about in his seat to take a last, fond look of the village and his dear old cottage home. The church, with its long tapering finger pointing high up into the sky, was growing momentarily more indistinct as it receded from his view. The sloping hills and broad rolling meadows were covered with winter's deep snow. The Mohawk, congealed from shore to shore, rolled along under its icy coverlet in dreamy silence. But there, back against the hill, with the curling smoke rising gracefully into the midst of the falling snow, stood his quaint little home. He looked upon the fast fading scene, and followed the irregular snow-drifts from the spot where the faithful dog was howling after his master, to the foot of the lawn, where, with uncovered head and handkerchief waving in the snowy air, he saw his poor old mother leaning over the garden gate, the very image of desolation and despair. He waved his hat while the tears froze to his cheeks, and when the turn in the road peremptorily closed the scene, he wrapped his cloak about him and yielded his heart to the wildest grief.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARBOR, THE GEM OF THE BOWERY.

"Saxy — take the butt."

"Now say ole man — what d'ye take me for — a foofoo."

"I 'se a butcher boy, I is. If yer don't believe what I say, smell of my boots."

MOSE.

COURTLAND STREET, in New York city, improved but little from 1848 up to 1870, when we last saw it. It was then what it was twenty-two years before, and probably is to-day, — a narrow, dirty thoroughfare, leading from Broadway down to the ferry. The Howard House, situated near the river, with rather a pleasing exterior for the locality, offered all the inducements of other hotels to catch the adventurous Californian. These were the harvest times for hackmen and hotel proprietors, as many unwary countrymen found to their cost.

The Howard House was where Frank Graham found his father on arriving in that city early one morning in December, 1848. How Mr. Graham happened to get into such questionable quarters, can best be explained by him in his defense to his son.

On his arrival at the station, on the night train

from Albany, he became, he said, absolutely overwhelmed with the noise of the bullying hackmen, who seemed to outnumber the passengers that had accompanied him on the train. His voice was drowned by their loud and persistent cries, and his efforts to make known his wishes were smothered in the confusion and uproar. He was rudely caught by his coat-collar by one man, and instantly seized and hustled away by another. In this inextricable jam his life was in imminent danger, and he seemed to have fallen into a den of wild beasts rather than among civilized men who are supposed to be the travelers' protectors and guides. He had no recollection how he reached the hack, or how the driver got his checks, but he was both astonished and pleased to discover in the room assigned him, that not only himself but his baggage was safe.

Mr. Graham's general appearance, it seems, caused no little commotion among the "regular boarders" and frequenters of this busy little oyster-house. Such a prize did not drop in their way very often, and such a prize must not be allowed to slip through their fingers without an effort to secure it. So Frank Graham was not surprised, when shown into his father's room on the morning of his arrival, to find him greatly distressed and his baggage strewn all over the floor. He had been robbed.

A mistaken sense of economy on the part of Mr.

Graham had periled their adventure, and but for the timely arrival of his son would have left them penniless, and brought their bright anticipations to a disastrous end. Mr. Graham, however, had no sooner received his son's letter assuring him that he would meet him the following Thursday, than he purchased two tickets on the ship *Orpheus*, which was advertised to sail in a few days, and took the precaution to go aboard and select a double berth near the fore-hatch. He had also purchased a regular line of provisions which had been duly accepted by the officers of the ship. Fortunately for both Mr. Graham and his son, the tickets for the voyage were not ready, but a written order in their favor on Messrs. Tracy & Co. to cover the purchase-money was given to him instead.

The robbery was both successful and complete. Everything which the thieves could make available was taken. Mr. Graham's clothes had been so thoroughly examined that the bulk of his funds was gone, also the order for the tickets, which he had taken so much pains to conceal. This was, indeed, a most distressing state of things, for this order insured the holders their passage to San Francisco, and was therefore of far more importance to them than its value in money. Unless they could recover this order, or prevent its exchange for the tickets, they would be left a financial wreck, and must return to their home broken and penniless.

Nothing was said or done to create the least suspicion in the minds of the proprietors of the Howard House, but as soon as they had completed their arrangements, they quietly left their lodgings. Mr. Graham went immediately to the shipping office, and Frank inquired his way to the City Hall, and placed the matter in the hands of the police department. The anxiety with which Frank awaited the return of his father can never be fully described. But he returned, thank Heaven, and the moment their eyes met he knew they were safe, and the meeting between them was the happiest they had ever experienced. Yes, the scoundrel had been to Messrs. Tracy & Co.'s office. He had used every means to realize the money on the ticket order, but failing in that, he had demanded the tickets, which were produced. But a pen and the order being handed to him, with the request that the latter be indorsed on its back, caused him to hesitate, and without even raising his eyes from the paper, or showing the slightest uneasiness, he laid down the pen, and leaving the order upon the counter, turned upon his heels, and quickly left the office.

Mr. Graham and his son left the Howard House, and took up their quarters at Lovejoy's, Park Row. The broken blade of the oyster-knife found inside of the rifled trunk, and the description of the man who presented the ticket order at the shipping of-

fice, brought the two thieves to the Tombs, and sent them finally to Blackwell's Island.

Let us continue this story a little farther to show our reader the reward which Frank Graham received before his vessel sailed from New York, for his persistent efforts to assist the law to punish criminals and suppress crime. A few days before the trial of these two men came off, and shortly after supper, Mr. Graham, with a couple of friends, started for the Broadway Theatre to see Lester personate the Count of Monte Cristo. Frank Graham remained at the hotel, where the following interesting colloquy took place, which shall be given to the reader in the exact words he used to relate the circumstances to his father on his return to their lodgings :—

"Well, father, now that we are alone, I have an interesting story, which, when you have taken off your boots and got settled in your chair, I will relate to you in detail, as near as I can remember."

"I am all ready, Frank ; please proceed."

"Well, sir," resumed Frank, "after you and your friends had gone, I took a seat by the fire in the reading room, and was engaged in conversation with some friends upon the rascally schemes the city sharpers have concocted to capture and fleece the unsophisticated countrymen *en route* to the land of gold. At that moment a gentlemanly looking

man with a black, sickly looking moustache, and strong marks of dissipation about his eyes, stepped up and said inquiringly, 'Your name is Graham, I believe.' 'Yes, sir,' I replied, rising politely, 'it is.' 'My name,' began the stranger, smiling, 'is Blackmore.' 'Allow me please to introduce to you my friend, Dixon.' Mr. Dixon came up, and bowing rather awkwardly, said, 'Happy, sir, to make your acquaintance.' Mr. Blackmore was a tall man, slimly built, and fairly dressed, and to my mind represented a Cooper Street graduate. Mr. Dixon, on the other hand, was a short, thick-set man with a round full face, wearing a red neck-tie and a rather attractive shirt. It was made of a dark green cassimere, with a small Masonic figure at the base, partially concealed by a red vine resembling an English ivy, which ran up the body. Mr. Dixon was typical of the Bowery boy so famed in the social calendar of this city.

"'Gentlemen,' said I persuasively, 'please be seated.' Mr. Blackmore answered blandly, 'Thank you, but we have come here to invite you out to-night. You know Carne's restaurant on Ann Street,' continued that gentleman, with great suavity, 'at that place are two ladies waiting to see you.'

"'Indeed, sir,' I laughingly replied, 'there must be some mistake, we have no lady acquaintances in this city.'

“‘We suspected as much,’ enticingly laughed Mr. Dixon, ‘and so for that reason, we propose introducing you to two handsome ones to begin with,’ he added, with a clumsy chuckle.

“‘Ah, sirs, I don’t deserve this great consideration. It is really too much,’ I said, deprecatingly; ‘and I deeply regret that I must decline the honor,’ I added, with a decisive shake of the head.

“Mr. Blackmore now began his work in earnest, and at every opportune moment his friend Dixon threw in his morsel of help. ‘The ladies,’ he said, ‘were the broken-hearted wives of the two men who have been arrested on suspicion of having robbed Mr. Graham’s trunk. The suspicion, however, is groundless, and their friends the victims of circumstantial evidence. They have known these men from boyhood, and they have borne an irreproachable character. They should not be appeared against, but their case allowed to go by default.’ Why, sir, these men made a deep impression upon my mind, and my doubts increased accordingly. Why, father, I cheerfully confess to you that at one period of the interview I possessed a weakness which came near cheating justice of her dues, and allowing these innocent ones to escape their just rewards. Indeed, sir, I was at one time deeply concerned about my own conduct in the matter, and was at the point of offering a formal apology and saying to these men,

that the case should be dropped, and their persecuted friends allowed to depart in peace. I might possibly have consented to some such terms, but the more I examined that shirt, the more I became troubled, and I concluded to sum the case up in one brief question. So I said, addressing myself to both gentlemen, who, for the first time, now looked into my face with symptoms of suspicion, —

“‘Let me be just to my own feelings as well as to your imprisoned friends, whose fate will depend, as far as I am concerned, upon the answer you give to the following question, Mr. Dixon. If you answer it as you should, your friends will have no occasion to regret your intercession. If you do not reply to it in a manner entitled to my respect, our interview and acquaintance must come to an end. Do you assent, gentlemen?’ ‘Oh, yes,’ they replied, cautiously. Then looking him right in the eyes, I said, pointedly: ‘Mr. Dixon, where did you get that shirt?’ pointing to the one he wore, which supported a pin of doubtful character. ‘Really, sir, you are rather too personal for your strength,’ gruffly retorted Mr. Dixon, rising stiffly in his chair, and drawing his coat-tail closely about his loins.

“‘I beg your pardon, sir,’ I said, appealing to Mr. Blackmore, who sat uneasily in his seat, and seemed fearful lest he should compromise his friend. ‘I believe, sir, that was the understanding, and I shall insist upon a prompt reply.’

“Mr. Blackmore, looking cautiously into the face of his friend, and anxiously awaiting some sign by which he could judicially act, was about to speak, when Dixon, without changing his position, naively retorted : ‘Why, sir, I bought it, and therefore came honestly by it.’

“‘The goods from which your shirt was made,’ I resumed, ‘were manufactured at the Middleton Mills of this State. My father designed that pattern and the goods were made under his supervision. From a piece of those goods his wife made him six shirts, which constituted a part of his effects on his leaving home for this city. If the shirt which Mr. Dixon wears is one of those stolen from the trunk at the Howard House last Wednesday, I will show both of you gentlemen my father’s name worked in full in the lap which forms the stay in the bosom. If the name is there, Mr. Dixon, the shirt is not yours and you did not come honestly by it. If the name is not there, you will, I am sure, as readily forgive me as I shall forgive your accused friends. I am ready, gentlemen, to risk the reputation and the innocence of your friends upon the finding of that name. If you, gentlemen, are ready to stake your interest upon the result of an investigation, let us walk into the clerk’s office at once.’ A death-like silence ensued, — a painful silence, which, although it lasted but a minute, seemed to me much

longer, during which I watched both of these men. Blackmore, dumbfounded and astonished, looked into the face of his friend, covered as it was with guilt and anger. Rising to his feet with a sudden bound, Mr. Dixon said, as he buttoned his coat over his broad, muscular chest, 'Blackmore, I have submitted to this youngster's insults as long as I care to. If his base insinuations are pleasing to you, they are not so to me;' and with a look upon his face I shall never forget he whirled round upon his heel, and walked rapidly out of the hotel. Mr. Blackmore immediately followed, and simply bowing with deep courtesy said 'good-night.'

"Soon after came another actor in this little farce, a closely shaven man with false whiskers, in the *rôle* of a detective. He claimed a private interview with me, and ever and anon exposed his assumed badge with 'private detective' pinned upon his vest. He assured me, confidentially, that his visit was more of inquiry than of arrest. I had, he said, incautiously admitted to the friends of these two criminals in the Tombs my willingness to drop the suit, should the stolen goods be returned at once. This, in the eye of the law, he said, was collusion, and might endanger my own safety at the moment when our ship was ready to sail. Statements to this effect had been made and recorded at 'headquarters.' The law was most severe, and justice blind to misapplied

sympathy. He would, he said, in conclusion, advise me as a *friend* to look out for myself or I might never see California."

Well, all these nice little schemes did not discourage Frank Graham, or prevent his appearing at court and giving in his testimony. Neither did they prevent these injured friends from being sent for six months to Blackwell's Island. But the conclusion of this story will show how dearly he paid for his obstinacy, and explain the ugly scar upon the top of his head which increases in size with his declining years. It will picture in a small degree the evils which exist in that stratum of human life, and show how near he came giving up his life to sustain the law and enforce its penalties.

He was first attracted to the Arbor, an oyster saloon on the Bowery, by the rich and tempting viands displayed in the window as he passed it one evening on his way to the famous old theatre of that name. And afterwards, as long as he stayed in the city, he shared his patronage with Charlie Locksley, as he was familiarly called by his friends.

Charles Locksley was an Englishman by birth, with a bright, intelligent face, and possessing a most amiable disposition—perhaps it was the love of home, and his still lingering devotion for his brave old flag, regardless of her faults, that allured him to the Arbor.

Charlie's saloon was always cozy and neat. The mahogany bar shone like glass. The decanters were tastefully arranged. The stove, standing in the centre of the room and resembling, as nearly as any stove can be made to resemble, an open fire-place, was brightly polished, and threw a warm, cheerful heat far out into the room. But one seat was to be seen, a common kitchen chair, heavy and strongly put together. The pictures which were hanging on different parts of the walls were genteel, respectable, and appropriate. For the accommodation of guests, there were at the rear of the room four double stalls with marble-topped tables, soft cushioned seats, and silken curtains to protect the visitor from the public gaze. There was a peculiar freshness about the saloon ; such an air of comfort, so much peaceful calm in everything one saw that it helped him much to enjoy the fancy roasts for which Charlie Locksley had become favorably known. On one end of the counter, in a handsome walnut case, stood a stuffed English setter as natural as life. At the other end, piled up half-way to the ceiling, were skillfully arranged pyramids of the celebrated Providence River oyster. Standing over a spirit lamp was a large copper urn, so nicely polished that one could see his face in it. It was curiously shaped, and the steam which issued from the top kept an egg suspended in air. A beautifully figured waiter cov-

ered with a clean white napkin, on which rested twelve heavy cut tumblers, shining in the gas-light like so many diamonds, was another feature of Charlie Locksley's saloon. A highly-colored card pinned to the frame of the mirror, and printed in handsome style, reminded the patrons on each cold winter night of their mutual friends and bosom companions, Tom and Jerry. Last but not least was the proprietor, — medium height, squarely built, short side whiskers, a light blue eye, frank open countenance, — a man in the prime of life. Such was Charlie Locksley.

We have taken some little pains to describe the Arbor and its proprietor, because the comedy which began at the Howard House terminated here, and a first-class tragedy was set up in its place. Here Charlie Locksley took part in the last scene, and here the curtain fell upon Graham's last night in the metropolis of the New World.

The ship which had been fitting so long was at last got ready, and was announced positively to sail the next day. Mr. Graham and his son went on board in the forenoon, took formal possession of their berth, and stowed away their bedding, books, and papers. They had taken with them everything which they thought would ameliorate their condition and lighten the tediousness of a protracted sea voyage. Their trunks were securely lashed, hampers

of fruits, pickles, and other delicacies were carefully concealed, and a large demijohn of fresh water, which proved invaluable to them in the confusion of the first few days at sea, was safely stowed away.

Mr. Graham remained on board to protect their property, and Frank returned to the hotel to pay their bills and take leave of their friends, intending to go aboard in the morning. Yes, it was his last night ashore, the eve of his departure to that land which flowed with milk and honey. He would go to the Bowery Theatre with West and Allison, take supper with them at Charlie Locksley's, and then separate, perhaps forever. Their tickets furnished them seats in the "dress circle." As they entered the theatre the curtain rose upon the first scene in "Hamlet." Soon after, young Graham, filled with surprise, rose with his companions to admit a gentleman and lady to the vacant seats next their own. It was Mr. Dixon. Yes, it was he, and no one else. Mr. Dixon saw Graham, but he neither spoke nor nodded. At the end of the first act Dixon retired, and his seat was occupied subsequently by a gentleman friend. Graham felt uneasy but said nothing. He felt sure that Dixon's absence meant trouble. When they reached the lobby, at the conclusion of the play, he quietly mentioned his fears to his friends. Mr. West suggested placing Graham between himself and Allison, to prevent any assault

being made while descending the sombre staircase. There was no trouble, however, and they reached the sidewalk unmolested. But on the edge of the curbstone, facing the entrance to the theatre, with the lights full in his face, stood Dixon surrounded by several companions. He did not move from his position until Graham and his associates had passed some distance into the darkness. Then Dixon and his companions followed.

Frank Graham was warmly received at the Arbor, and after introducing his friends and informing Locksley that this was his last night ashore, and that he should sail in the morning, he ordered supper for the party, and they took seats in the first vacant stall. Charlie Locksley, unusually affable with Graham and his friends, sat talking with them until some gentlemen came in, when he stepped quickly behind the bar. It was Dixon and his followers. Mr. West, pulling down the curtain with a jerk, and buttoning up his coat nervously, said in a whisper, —

“Boys, we are going to have trouble here, and you had better prepare for it. It is you they are after, Graham,” he added, “and their visit here means mischief and revenge.”

“Be persuaded, Frank, and keep out of their way,” feelingly remarked Allison.

“Yes, and let me go out and reconnoitre,” hurriedly suggested West.”

At this moment there came through the curtain one of Locksley's tumblers. It cut its way through and struck the gas jet, thus putting out the light. This was the first shot, and it was accepted, as it was intended by the assailants, as a declaration of war. The three friends sprang to their feet; West, putting up the curtain, stepped out. Receiving a kick in the stomach, he went down upon his knees. In the frenzy of the moment, Allison, seizing a heavy salt-cellar, and Graham, a mustard cruet, sallied out together. The former parried a blow aimed at his face, and instantly closed with his man. The latter received from Dixon a hard blow in the neck, which sent him whirling up to the end of the bar. This was quickly followed by another, when Locksley, finding he could no longer remain neutral, dealt Dixon a heavy blow upon the head with a lemon-squeezer, which brought the blood and caused him to loose his hold on Graham. But he instantly turned upon Locksley, who grappled with the instigator of this broil, and the contest between the two men continued fierce and bloody to the end. Graham recovered in season to find his friend West in a perilous situation. He had been pushed backwards over the chair and lay upon his back, covered by a rough, who had seized him by the throat, and was absolutely trying to throttle him to death. Graham sprang forward, and seizing the chair, brought

it down upon the head and shoulders of the would-be murderer with such force as to send him bleeding upon the floor.

The contest had now become mixed and desperate. Innocent parties were drawn in, either from sympathy or interest, and a scene of the wildest confusion ensued. The police were called, and the rattles of those guardians of the public peace broke sharply upon the midnight air. But the crash of broken windows and the oaths of struggling men were now drowned by cries of Fire! The stove had been overturned in the *melée*, the light drapery attached to the stalls had been set on fire by the live coals, and the *Arbor*, the *Gem of the Bowery*, was in flames. Charlie Locksley's presence of mind not only saved his saloon from destruction, but also prevented Graham's arrest, and the unpleasant consequences which must have followed. The moment the flames burst out the combatants, becoming alarmed for their safety, fled. Graham, with a face ghastly as death, and a voice hoarse from emotion, cried out to Locksley, "O God, Charlie! how can we be saved!" With the quickness of a shuttle from the hand of the weaver, he raised the trap door from where he had stood, and whispering into Frank's ear, "Follow me," jumped down into the darkness, accompanied by his friend. There was a small, glimmering light burning at the gas jet in the

rear of the cellar. Locksley turned on the gas, and sprang for a coil of hose resting upon a peg in the wall. Taking the nozzle in one hand and letting out the coil with the other, he told Graham to let on the water and stay where he was. The thoughts which passed through his mind, as he stood alone in the basement of Locksley's saloon, furnished food for a score of stories to his friends in after years. A severe cut on the top of his head, his body bruised and sore, his clothes torn in shreds and splattered with blood; fire above him, and possibly death, — should he escape these he would most likely be arrested, committed for examination, and held, possibly, as a witness against these men. His ship would in the mean time sail without him, he would be left helpless and aimless, and his gray-haired father deeply troubled. But these calamities were avoided, and Graham's hopes revived when Locksley, coming down, assured him that all was quiet, the saloon was closed, and they would spend the balance of the night together. The light was turned down, and Frank followed Locksley up into the saloon. The scene which met his eyes was beyond his worst fears, the desolation shocking to behold, and seating himself in the only remaining stall, he raised his eyes to the face of his bruised and battered friend, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER V.

ROUNDING CAPE HORN.

“ Adieu, adieu, my native shore
Fades o’er the waters blue,
The night winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea mew.
Yon sun that sets upon the sea,
We follow in his flight,
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My native land — Good-night.”

BYRON.

ON the twenty-fifth of December, 1848, the ship Orpheus left her moorings, and sailed for San Francisco, California. A large proportion of her passengers were residents of New York city and its surroundings. Small steamers and pleasure boats filled with anxious friends followed the vessel as she moved slowly out into the bay. The wharves, too, were covered with people who were there to bid the adventurous voyagers good-by. The excitement was intense, and the air was filled with wild huzzas ; hats went up into the air, handkerchiefs waved, and as cheer upon cheer reverberated from ship to shore, that beautiful vessel, as well as many of the daring spirits on her decks, left the harbor never to return.

She stood out under a dull leaden sky, and a light snow-storm, leaving Sandy Hook and the low New

Jersey shores upon her lee. The decks were cleared, the watches set, the messes formed, the sails unfurled, and under a heavy press of canvas she sailed swiftly out into the broad Atlantic. Confusion subsided, order was restored, and, the people fraternizing, the ship's discipline was submitted to with peaceful resignation. The excitement attending the separation was over, their homes and friends could be seen no more, and the ship, a mere speck upon the horizon, freighted with human hopes and fears, glided upon her course, bearing with her many aching hearts, and minds filled with fantastic dreams.

Two hundred and fifty young, ardent, and adventurous men, buoyant with reckless imagination, confined in such narrow limits for upwards of six months must, indeed, be saints to live together, restricted to navy rations of inferior quality, doled out with sparing hand, and bordering upon starvation, without dissensions and sometimes open conflict. It would, indeed, be wonderful, surrounded by varied difficulties, and sometimes by the insufferable privations which always accompany those who go down into the sea in ships if the heterogenous mass of humanity on board the *Orpheus* should not yield to the pressure of personal grievances occasionally, and resort to a mutual trial of muscular strength, preceded by a little pugilistic science. Such encounters are not without their justifying merits, and when

used with moderation do good, and are commendable. They are not only exhilarating but purifying.

A voyage around Cape Horn, under the most favorable circumstances, tries a man's patience and endurance. But when made with a large body of men, removed from all social influences, and surrounded by corrupting scenes, the adventure is much harder to be borne. One after another the masks began to fall. Slumbering jealousies awoke, angry discussions turned to blows, and violence and bloodshed were frequent occurrences till they had "rounded the Horn." Head winds, heavy seas, six hours' daylight, food badly cooked, and more miserably served, officers cross and indifferent, cook drunken and ugly, sailors insolent and brutal, squealing pigs, filthy hen-coops, decks swashed with water, berths damp and musty, — these were among the trials of the voyage; but if anything was needed to complete the list of unbearables, the "captain lost his reckoning, the ship was without bearings under close-reefed topsails, laboring against both a head wind and sea, and drifting surely upon the lee shore, the cook was under arrest, and all hands had to turn in without supper."

Songs and boisterous laughing following are heard between decks, and the fumes of liquor and tobacco commingle. Suddenly angry words take the place of songs, and oaths and violence fall like a wet

blanket upon the gathering mirth. Jim Ferris, the Williamsburg "pet," a large, powerfully built man, a little too groggy for his own safety, stripped to the waist, and spoiling for a fight, determined to clean out mess number seven for a fancied insult. Having worked himself into a furious passion, he jumped out of his berth, and started down to midships under the glimmering lights of the steerage lanterns, resolved to annihilate that body of men or die in the attempt. He was met by Judson, a young minister of the gospel, who considered this a splendid opportunity to test his persuasive eloquence as a messenger of peace. Being received upon the point of Jim's massive fist, he went down to leeward with the speed of an arrow, and was seen no more. With the leap of a tiger, Judson's chum and mess-mate sprang upon Ferris, and with the heel of a heavy sea-boot dealt him a blow upon the head that knocked the bully upon his knees. But Judson's chum followed his friend under difficulties of no ordinary character, for a huge tin-kettle half full of water flew after him, and striking him squarely in the back of the head, he whirled round with frightful gasps and dropped heavily upon the deck. Forty angry men now rushed to the assistance of their friends on either side, a rough and disgraceful fight ensued, which furnished a scene for the voyagers unequalled for brilliancy and endurance while they

remained together. It was terminated, fortunately for all concerned, by a heavy sea, which dashed squarely over the weather bow, and then plunging down the fore-hatch, rushed swiftly to midships, putting out the forward lights, and leaving the combatants in darkness, and up to their knees in water.

These little side-scenes were occasionally brought out, only modified in picturesqueness, and tempered with less serious results. They seemed, however, to have a beneficial effect, just as a rain-storm has upon the hot and dusty earth in midsummer, cooling the ground, purifying the air, and leaving the foliage and flowers fresh and sparkling. Then came the punishment. The cook, refusing to do duty, was put in irons and taken aft to the captain for trial. The "discipline of the ship must be enforced, and the authority of its officers made supreme." The opportunity to apologize was given him, the acceptance of which would have permitted him to return to duty, but he declined, and his friends becoming provoked at his obstinacy, he was sentenced to be flogged. The sickening details of this scene were faithfully carried out. The stubborn cook was stripped to the waist, his hands were lashed to the rigging, and he received fifty lashes upon his bare back. This was one of the most painful scenes witnessed during the voyage.

The next difficulty of any importance was the in-

dignation meeting and its unpleasant consequences. Its cause was the unwholesome supplies issued to the messes, which were at times so bad that they could not be used. Secret mutterings rose to open threats and denunciations. Small groups of disaffected men swelled into a large body, thus opening the door for turbulent spirits to make themselves conspicuous and inflame still more the minds of those excited. A grand meeting was called, officers chosen, and strong resolutions covering the sense of the meeting adopted. Inflammatory speeches were made, denouncing the owners and holding the officers responsible for the impurity of the water and the condition of their supplies. It was voted to visit the captain in a body the next day, and demand better water, better pork, and better bread, or the ship to be headed for the nearest port. Accordingly at the appointed time about one hundred malcontents gathered, and with their president at their head marched in solemn order to the quarter-deck. Mr. Bottomly, from Yonkers, a defunct politician with some knowledge of law and less of good sense, assumed the responsibilities of the hour, and being handed up to a temporary stand in the quarter boat, faced the captain and his first officer and addressed him as follows :—

“ Captain Freeman : There are times in the life of men which, when taken at the flood, lead to for-

tune. The time of your life has come when you must either furnish us better grub, or go down into the sea and stay there. (Applause.) Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. The disease which has stricken this ship's company is slimy water, rotten bread, and offensive meat. The remedy for you to apply is better food and more of it. (Great applause.) No man on this ship has a profounder regard for the venerable navigator Noah, or concede to him higher praise for the abilities he displayed during the forty days of the flood, than I. I only regret his voyage was not sufficiently prolonged to prevent our being obliged to eat his leavings. (Prolonged applause.) I hold in my hand a petition and set of resolutions, condemning both owners and officers of this ship for the deception and fraud practiced upon their passengers. Allow me in behalf of these injured people to present you with them. (Refuses.) Very good, sir. The sentiments which they contain are embodied in the following brief sentences. We are here on business, and, sir, we mean business. If you have better food on board of this ship, we must have it. If not we demand you to put this ship into the nearest port. Should you refuse that, we shall take this ship from you and put her in there ourselves. You can have till to-morrow morning to decide."

Captain Freeman paid respectful attention to the

orator, his deep gray eyes resting fully upon him. Upon being addressed by the leader of the crowd, he scarcely moved from where he stood or showed the least fear or anger. Nevertheless, there was an occasional twitching of the muscles of the face, and perhaps a little nervousness in the arms as he thrust his hands deeper into the pockets of his pea-jacket. He was a small man, not over five feet four, and slim and active as a school-boy. The face, being the index of the man, although deeply bronzed and disfigured by storms and exposure, possessed a marked degree of intelligence. No sooner was Mr. Bottomly handed down, than the captain sprang into his place. Stooping over to leeward he spat upon the deck, and then tossing into the sea a quid of tobacco of astonishing proportions, spoke to his audience in these words:—

“Passengers: When this ship was provisioned and fitted for this voyage, I was on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, with my family. Therefore I am no more responsible for the condition of your food and water than you are. The owners employed me to take this ship to San Francisco, and I mean to do it. This ship is insured with certain conditions, and these conditions permit us to enter but two ports, Valparaiso and our port of destination. With ordinary luck we shall reach the former in twenty days, and that is the only port this ship will enter while I

am her master. This is all the time I require and this is my answer."

And springing back upon the deck he went down into his cabin.

This brief and laconic reply of Captain Freeman narrowed the issue and brought the belligerents to a halt. Indeed, he had taken a perilous stand, for although a majority of the ship's company were opposed to open violence and mutiny, it must be admitted they were in favor of the spirit and honest purposes of the meeting; but while sustaining the efforts of the petitioners they regretted the ill-chosen words of their president. A formal demand had been made upon the owners' representative for better food, which he had virtually admitted was beyond his power to produce. He had been told in that case to put his ship into the nearest port and he had peremptorily refused. They had threatened to take his ship from him should he fail to comply, and he had assured them that this they could only do by first depriving him of his life. Thus matters stood. There seemed no middle ground. The Rubicon in this case was indeed narrow. Would Cæsar cross. Let us see. A captain on board his ship upon the high seas, is invested by law with a degree of power which makes him literally the monarch of all he surveys. His authority cannot be disputed, and he holds the destinies of both ship and crew, as

it were, in the hollow of his hand. His owners intrust him with the ship and cargo, and the nation under whose flag he sails confides to his care the lives of those who accompany him. He sails out upon the great deep with his line of duties clearly defined, and the responsibilities of his situation engraven upon his heart. The laws giving him this great power were created for his use and guidance, and he is sustained in their lawful enforcement. In moments of supreme danger when great perils arise he neither falters nor shirks his duty, but either survives with an unblemished name or goes down with his ship, loyal to his duty and trust.

Supported, then, by the laws of his country, conscious of his rights and the dignity of his station, Captain Freeman was determined to give up his life, rather than yield to a fractious mob which would compromise the one and humiliate the other. The moment, therefore, that he returned to his cabin, the men gathered in groups and discussed in anger the unsuccessful results of their interview. Some were cool, but perplexed, others excited and furious at what they considered a flat refusal to mitigate their wrongs. At this juncture the colored steward, carrying in his hands a tray covered with meats, was edging his way through the crowds of hungry men to the captain's table, when his tray was seized and the contents instantly vanished. Quick as a

flash of lightning, the steward felled one of the men to the deck, hurled another into the lee scuppers, and rushed into the cabin followed by a wild and infuriated mob, crying for vengeance and better food.

The scene which presented itself that day was worthy of an artist's pencil, and can better be imagined than described. The captain stood at the head of his table, with his officers and a dozen cabin passengers standing about him defenseless, speechless with fear, and astonishment depicted upon their faces. The cabin had by this time become filled with these disorderly men, shouting at the top of their voices for better food and more of it. As soon as the noise had subsided, the captain said, —

“Gentlemen, you are trespassing here, and I protest against your remaining any longer !”

“Well, suppose we object,” said one of the leaders, as he edged himself to the front, “what then ?”

“Why, sir, I shall order you out ; and every man that refuses to go shall be arrested on our arrival at Valparaiso and sent home in irons. I command you to leave this cabin immediately. I shall listen to no petition accompanied by threats. One hour hence meet me upon the quarter-deck, with one or the other, and I will answer you according to its merits.”

Did they go ? Yes, they did ! They knew that

the captain was right, and they felt that they were in the wrong ; and the reconciliation which took place between them the next day was indeed grateful and most sincere. It was better that they should submit to the evils they knew, than fly unto others they knew not of.

But happier days and pleasanter nights were to dawn upon them shortly, and the painful annoyances and disgusting scenes were to be forgotten and seen no more. Twenty-one days and nights were passed in the "valley of the shadow of death," and they came out stamped with the imprint of some of the evils which ever follow seclusion, laziness, and filth. Having rounded the cape, clearer skies and warmer winds were observed and felt. The island of Juan Fernandez, the home of Robinson Crusoe, came into view, and Mt. Chimborazo, the great landmark of the southern continent, assured them of their near approach to the coast of Chili. Fair winds, charming weather, and anticipations quickened by the sight of land, soon put matters to rights, and everybody, from the fore-castle to the quarter-deck, was happy.

One possesses an indescribable feeling in going ashore in a foreign country, or mingling among people of similar color and language. But the interest which accompanies him, as he moves among people dissimilar every way, not only differing in habits

and style of living, but in their country and products, cannot very well be described.

About the middle of April the *Orpheus* anchored at Valparaiso, the chief commercial port of the Republic of Chili. The going on shore, and the opportunities which now offered themselves for mutual interchange of views, besides the privileges so long forbidden and now so plenteous, were shared and enjoyed alike by all, and long after they had resumed their journey the soothing influences of ten days and nights in that romantic old city were clearly felt and appreciated. The messes were reformed, hidden delicacies brought out, and absent members again seen enjoying their "duff" and New Orleans "syrup" at their accustomed places forward of the mainmast.

At the entrance to San Francisco Bay there is a headland stretching far out into the sea, which, when seen at a distance, looks like a finger upon a man's hand. It can be seen for many miles from a vessel's deck as she approaches the Golden Gate from the southward and westward. This headland is a guide-post, saying to the weary mariner, "To San Francisco." As they neared the land of promise, every eye was strained to catch a glimpse of it. A strong northwest wind blew, driving the sea high upon the beach. The sea birds swooped down and skimmed the crests of the waves as the guide-post,

now seen, became more and more distinct. The captain, with his chart nailed to a board, stood by the capstan, nervous and anxious, as sail after sail burst or tore from its earing and filled the air with its fragments. It was an hour of deep interest, and no one on that ship watched the scene with more earnestness than Frank Graham, as he clung to the ratlines, the spray dashing into his face, and the wind tossing his long hair behind him. Yes, the supreme moment of their danger had arrived and passed. They had entered the Golden Gate; the Eldorado of the world was in view; their doubts and fears were over; and amid the shouts of joy and welcome, the good ship *Orpheus* dropped anchor between her rivals, the *Greyhound* and *Architect*, July 8, 1849.

CHAPTER VI.

THE START FROM SUTTER'S FORT.

Like an isle in the sea the fortress stood,
Surrounded by waves of fertile lands,
A refuge and guide to adventurous sons,
That come to inherit its golden strands.

But between its walls
So grim and wan,
Death and eternity
Stalked hand in hand.

The ravens croaked in the belfry tower,
As counted the bellstroke one, two, three,
And the prowling wolf his vigil kept,
As night birds flew from tree to tree.

But they dug his grave
Both narrow and deep,
And laid him down
To eternal sleep.

THE AUTHOR.

LOOKED at from the deck of a ship anchored in the bay, July, 1849, San Francisco presented a most singular appearance, and to the famishing pioneers offered but a cold and inhospitable welcome. The settlement looked like a great heap of driftwood blown in with the surf and left in one heterogeneous mass by the receding tide. The long, rolling sand-hills, dotted here and there with scrub oaks and blighted pines, the broad, circling beach, sloping from the precipitous headlands, the sea birds swoop-

ing down from their dizzy heights and screaming over the sombre bay, exhibited a picture too desolate for description.

On going ashore, however, the party found the town less displeasing in appearance. The few but quaint old buildings were illy prepared to provide for the motley crowd daily increasing in numbers, so tents were pitched and huts erected according to the whim of the occupants, regardless of beauty or usefulness. The curling smoke went up from these tiny homes, cooking utensils were brought for the first time into use, and "slap-jacks" and pork sandwiches were eaten from pewter plates without a murmur. But these were only temporary homes, hastily constructed shelters soon to disappear, as their adventurous inmates settled in the distant mines.

It will be necessary to treat briefly the events of five years. Incidents must supersede details, and current events covering these weary years brought within the scope of an evening's reading, or the purpose of the author will be defeated.

The party to which the Grahams belonged consisted of seven strong, able-bodied men. The reader will please follow these pathfinders through their unsuspected hardships and see what befalls them. You are asked to bid good-by to San Francisco, to shipmates and friends, to cast your eyes far out over

the water, and wave your hat high in the air as the little schooner bearing these hardy spirits stands out over the bay and lays her course for the Sacramento River. You are expected to remember the mortgaged home and the anxious hearts it shelters, but you are earnestly asked never for a moment to forget that troubled soul at Rugby Farm.

Sutter's Fort, the residence of Captain Sutter, the prince of pioneers and discoverer of gold in California, stood out in the open plains, about midway between the Coast Range and the Sierra Nevadas. It was flanked by the American River which empties into the Sacramento a short league to the westward. The triangle which these two rivers form is the head of navigation and the site of Sacramento City.

Sutter's Fort was the outpost of civilization and the grand rendezvous of the early pioneers *en route* to the mines. No company of gold-seekers on their way to the "diggings" passed this famous old settler without calling on him, either for supplies or for information. It is here we overtake the Graham party, who, having completed their arrangements, are to take their departure for the North Fork of the American River. It is here, also, that Mr. Graham decided to separate from the company and return to Sacramento. It was a precautionary measure on the part of Mr. Graham, and was

planned against any misfortune which might overtake his son. The subject was carefully considered, and it was mutually understood that whichever succeeded best the other should follow.

The view from the walls of Sutter's Fort presented a landscape both beautiful and refreshing. The eye rested upon one vast level plain enlivened by belts of timber designating the courses of the rivers as they rolled along from the Sierras to the sea. Herds of wild cattle were grazing along the river bottoms, and horses as wild as the wind lay in the shade of the mighty oaks that dotted the luxuriant valley. The Coast Range formed a high black wall upon the western horizon, and following along, hid themselves in the distance. The Sierra Nevadas, covered with everlasting snow, so far away, and yet so near that the beholder felt their cool, invigorating breath, gleamed in the sunlight like immense pillows of gold, as they stretched their lofty summits far up into the northern sky. The American River, cool and sparkling, fresh from its mountain source, rolled along silently and added its volume and strength to the drowsy Sacramento. The sky was clear ; not a cloud to be seen. Not a habitation was visible, not a human being in sight, except an occasional vaquero with jingling spurs and wide sombrero as he went plunging over the prairie in search of his herd.

As the party were about to descend from the walls of the fort, Captain Sutter turned and pointing his finger in the direction of the Sierras said, "Follow that trail, and ford the river below the bend ; it is broadest there and the water is shallow. Then bear to the left for an hour and start for the bald headed mountain yonder. Keep it constantly before you, and if you are not devoured by the wolves, you should reach the end of your journey on the eve of the second day." The party then took leave of Captain Sutter and Mr. Graham, the latter remaining behind to establish a business house in the prospective city of Sacramento. The leave-taking between Mr. Graham and his son was both manly and affectionate. They grasped each other by the hand, and for a moment looked each other in the eye, then, with one short embrace, the lips met, and they separated forever.

The party experienced considerable difficulty in fording the river, and at one time it was believed the attempt must be abandoned and the company return to the fort.

The mule is the prince of animals in stupidity and self-conceit. You may invest your last dollar in him. You may put him in training under the most ingenious artist, and when you have done he is only a mule. You may talk to him upon the importance of joining some secret society. You may

display to him the social magnificence of a ministerial calling. You may fill him full of metaphysics and the infallibility of man, and yet you have accomplished nothing. He knows all. He is a peculiar animal, and entertains an exalted opinion of his own superiority. He holds in contempt any suggestions, and frequently takes exception to the most forcible if not elegant expressions known to the English language. At times he will stand and listen with the most dignified calmness. At others his ears will indicate his line of thought, and his heels proclaim a declaration of war. As to his virtues, if he has any, make whatever allowance you choose, — cover the rough edges of his character as becomes a Christian's duty, — but don't deny that he is a stupendous fraud and a fool.

It was the rebellious spirit of these long-eared gentlemen, and the time occupied in effecting a compromise, that delayed the party in fording the river. The stream once crossed, however, and the mules repacked, the party moved rapidly forward, and went into camp upon reaching the first spring of water. The animals were carefully picketed out to browse, the evening meal disposed of, the blankets spread, the pipes lighted, and the company were summarizing the events of the day. The sun had just disappeared behind the Coast Range and the calm of the evening had scarcely set in, when there was

heard from over the prairie a quick, sharp bark, followed by a prolonged and indescribable howl. This was answered in a similar manner from another direction, as if it were a signal for a forward movement, for instantly there came through the gathering darkness a simultaneous howling along the whole line, which increased in volume as the invaders neared the camp. Each man grasped his rifle and sprang to his feet. The scene which presented itself was both novel and interesting. They were literally surrounded by prairie wolves. The first thing of importance was to secure the animals and protect themselves. The camp was moved back upon the edge of the spring, and breastworks were hastily constructed of pack-saddles, sacks of flour, sides of bacon, and camp utensils. The line of defense was a sort of half circle resting upon the edge of the spring. In the centre of this little retreat the boys stood and poured volley after volley into these "pesky varmints." This treatment had the desired effect, for those of their assailants that were able to do so gradually fell back, and aside from their hideous noise troubled them no more.

The picture which presented itself to the eyes of the drowsy gold-seekers on the following morning has never been forgotten. The cries of the prairie wolf had died away upon the distant hills. The purpling east and its shafts of gold announced the new-

born day. Yonder, moving steadily in the direction of the spring, could be seen a scattered herd of antelopes. They did not realize their peril until within a short distance of the camp, when they became startled by Carter and Bryant rising to their feet. They seemed for a moment paralyzed, and stood gazing at the intruders with astonishment. "Take the doe to the left," whispered Carter, as he drew his rifle at a rest, and fired. Two leaden slugs plowed through her body, and leaping up ten feet into the air, she fell dead in her tracks; the others, filled with fright, bounded off like the wind and sought safety in the forests. Several of the wolves lay dead about the camp, while others, too badly disabled to get away, watched the movements of the party while writhing in pain. As the day advanced the vultures were seen gathering over their prey, while the ravens and buzzards croaked as they swooped along over the plains.

The mules had got terribly snarled up during the night, and were found in the morning more or less bruised and cut. One of the largest, which the party had named Moses, because of his being constantly at the head, was found buried in a mud-hole close to the spring. He had got entangled in his fastenings during the night, and had plunged head-long down the embankment. Upon being hauled out he presented a spectacle not easily described.

This powerful old pathfinder was an object of pity. What a contrast to his appearance the day before. His body was covered with mud ; his head was bowed in humble resignation ; his ears lopped down the sides of his head like wilted cabbage leaves ; his tail — well it was there, but alas its prestige was gone. There he stood, poor fellow, his courage fizzled, his enthusiasm dead, his dignity compromised — a perfect picture of “Patience upon a monument smiling at Grief.”

It was late before the company got away from their camping-place. The sun was streaming through the notches of the Sierra Nevada. A silent gloom pervaded the great waste. Not a living thing could be seen except the carrion birds settling down upon their late camp and feasting upon the living and the dead. The party now followed the landmark until concealed by the heavy belts of timber that skirted the plains as far as the eye could reach. Several Indian trails, bearing imprints of human feet in the soft sandy loam, were crossed as they penetrated the great watersheds of the approaching river. The woods were full of wild game. Reptiles of different species glided stealthily out of sight and danger. Grouse drummed upon the trees. Flocks of quail shot out of the thicket. The timid hare darted with lightning speed into the heavy ferns, while the nimble squirrel scampered from tree to tree. The star-

tled deer, surprised in his retreat, fled before them. The sneaking wolf trotted to a place of safety, and watched his enemies as they moved slowly over the rolling uplands. The grave old grizzly bear with his mate snuffed the impious air and climbing up the steep, craggy hills, gazed upon the intruders with seeming wonder and alarm.

The night was fast closing in around them as they reached the ridge that formed the rim of the great basin. From here they took a long, lingering look at the broad, deep valley covered with heavy timber, and listened to the steady roar of the river plunging through the precipitous cañons many hundreds of feet below where they stood. One more effort brought them down upon the banks of this stream. Here they pitched their tent, formally took possession of Horseshoe Bar, and declared themselves the advanced guards to the North Fork of the American River.

Three months after their settlement upon this bar, there came into the group of camps a Mexican on horseback inquiring for the Graham company. They were cooking their supper at the time that the stranger rode up and saluted them. It was Antoine, the servant of Captain Sutter. The recognition was mutual and the native Californian received a hearty welcome. Before dismounting he told in broken English the object of his visit. Mr. Graham

was dangerously ill. He had been brought to the fort for care and treatment. If Frank wished to see his father again alive he must leave at once. He had been already absent three days, and had sought him from the junction of the rivers up to where they stood. Preparations were at once made to leave at break of day. Sympathizing deeply with Graham's anxiety, his associates sat up with him all night. The horses were brought up and groomed, a hasty breakfast prepared, the rifles reloaded, the canteens filled, then Graham and Antoine sprang into their saddles. Bidding adieu to camp mates and friends, they dashed out over the bottoms and were quickly lost in the woods. They soon struck the main trail leading into the wagon road connecting Auburn with Sacramento. With a well-beaten road before them, they pressed their horses to the utmost speed. An hour's rest at the Springs and again to the saddle. Heavy emigrant trains were met on their way to the mines, and long lines of pack mules passed them on their way to the river for supplies. The solemn grandeur of the prairies was rapidly passing away, and civilization, like an armed man, was marching into the centre of the wildest retreats.

They arrived at Sutter's Fort long before the sun had reached the meridian. Dismounting within the inclosure, Frank Graham gave his horse in charge

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GRAHAM AND ANTOINE CROSSING THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY.

of Antoine, and followed the servant to the "quarters." A perceptible change had taken place within the past four months. The fort had been transformed into a hospital, and many sickly-looking men were seen lounging about in the warm October air. In the corner of the reception room stood a desk upon which lay a register where each patient's name and late place of residence were recorded. On the shelves about the room were noticed bundles of clothing neatly secured and tagged with the owner's name. Mr. Graham's name was on that book, and his bundle of clothes lay on the shelf nearest the door. The date of his entering the hospital, and the nature of his disease were there, but the blank adjoining his name was not filled out as were those above when discharged or dead. Frank gazed upon the register and the singular looking bundles in painful silence. He began to suffer intensely with suspense while his heart throbbed with suspicion and alarm. At this moment the attending physician entered, and with a polite bow looked keenly into the eyes of his visitor and said, "Your name is Graham, I believe."

"Yes, sir," replied Frank, "and I have come to see my father."

"Yes, I see," musingly interrupted the doctor, then hesitated, and for some moments stood twisting the ends of his long, gray beard with his fingers,

into a sort of half knot. Suddenly he broke the silence by saying, "Graham, I fear you are too late. Please be seated. I have an engagement for a short time. I will send in your father's nurse." And turning quickly upon his heel, started for the door. But Graham grasped him firmly by the arm, before he had time to get away, and with a voice choked with emotion, begged him to end this painful suspense and tell him the worst at once.

To this appeal the doctor immediately took his seat at the desk, and with pen and ink filled out the blank in his father's record. Then pointing with his finger to the book he left the room.

The completed record read as follows: "James Graham, arrived October 17, 1849. Disease, hæmorrhage of the bowels. Died, October 27th. Buried, 28th. Late residence, Littleton, N. Y. No effects."

A few minutes later the nurse found Graham with his face buried in his hands, in great distress. He assured him everything had been done to comfort his father in his last moments. He had been brought close to a window overlooking the prairie, and when found, his eyes were fixed upon the trail leading up from the ferry. It was here that he had lain for long, weary hours, and felt his life fast ebbing away. It was here between anguish and hope — with his eyes sweeping the broad open plains, and his heart

yearning tenderly for the return of his boy — that his sun set in gloom and obscurity, to rise again on a far more glorious morn. His remains were securely wrapped in his blanket and buried, and they now rest in the shadow of the wall in the centre of the Sacramento Valley.

The following note, found pinned to the bosom of his father's shirt, was presented to Graham with the bundle of clothing :—

“MY DEAR BOY, — I am rapidly sinking — I shall be gone before you arrive. My effects are with Stanley at the ferry. Settle with Antoine for his services, and liquidate this department with the residue. Release your mortgaged home and keep it. Be kind to your mother. Be a comfort to her declining years, and a staff to her old age. Submit to the vicissitudes of life with fortitude, and be of good cheer. We shall meet again.

“Your affectionate father,

“GRAHAM.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE INDIAN RAID AT THE CORRAL.

"Oh! breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonored his relics are laid;
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,
As the night dew that falls on the grave o'er his head.

"But the night dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps,
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls."

MOORE.

IF you stand upon Piza's Hill and let your eyes follow the range of hills which encircle the Spanish Corral, you will be reminded of the similarity it bears to a huge wash-basin. The bottom of the cavity rises gradually at the centre, then sloping gracefully down along, forms a beautiful, broad, and level valley. The timbered walls run up sharply with ugly cliffs and massive bowlders, and the ravines which traverse the hill-sides and empty into the bottoms are the beds through which the winter rains find access to the main ravine.

There are two ways to reach the basin; one from the north, beginning in the neighborhood of Bear River, and the other, by following the trail along the bank of the Auburn ravine. This beautiful

camping ground was occupied by the Chief Piza and his tribe of Indians. They had long lived in this secluded spot, because of its proximity to the rivers, which abounded with fish. The woods were also filled with game, and the prairies alive with herds of cattle. Then, again, the timber was largely of oak, the acorn furnishing another important article of food. There was still another inducement to their remaining here which was of no less importance, the singular formation of the inclosure, which afforded them protection against surprise by hostile bands. Chief Piza had possibly seen the pale-faced man, in his visits to the river for supplies for his tribe, but few of his people, however, had seen or heard anything of him. Hence the sudden appearance of three white men leading their horses into his domains was a surprise. These men were Carter, Graham, and Bryant, on a prospecting tour. They were hunting for winter diggings for the miners on Horseshoe Bar, and had unexpectedly got into the Corral, so were as much astonished at their strange position as were Piza and his people. Of course they were immediately surrounded by the startled tribe, and continued for some time to be the object of eager curiosity. Strange as it may seem, they were not molested, but followed from place to place and closely watched. They filled their sacks with specimens of dirt from the gulches and

ravines, and were allowed to depart with no further annoyance than might have been expected from a tribe of bewildered savages whose inquisitiveness could not be appeased. Shortly after this event the Graham party moved into the Corral and settled there. Subsequently other and larger parties went in and took up claims, and the charm and beauties of Piza's ranche faded away forever. Poor Piza became greatly disturbed, and visited each new arrival with grunts of displeasure. Indeed, his condition had become very trying. Hitherto pleasantly situated, surrounded by every comfort his rude simplicity required, to what had he and his people been reduced? The rivers had already been filched from them, and the deer either slain or driven beyond their domains. Their timber was fast yielding to the woodman's axe, while the prairies were being swept as with a broom. Piza was a man of peace and counseled forbearance; but there was no peace. The sanctity of his wigwam was not wholly secure from intrusion. The purity of his people was oftentimes exposed to temptation and sin, and trouble and discontent filled the air. This was the way matters stood at the opening of spring, when, to the astonishment of all, the Indians surrendered their camp grounds and quietly moved away.

Piza located his tribe upon Bear River, and while smarting under the wrongs inflicted by the white

man, listened to evil counsels and permitted his young men to make a raid upon the Corral. Entering the basin at one end, they passed out through the other and escaped. They did not attack the camps in detail, but deployed in a fan-like form and swept over the encampment like a tornado. It was a bold and hazardous undertaking, but successfully carried out. The trail was broad and bloody, and vengeance and hate quailed at its own work.

The raid was speedily followed by retaliation sharp and severe. Other and similar assaults were made in that vicinity, into which other tribes and other parties were drawn, and soon there commenced a desultory war which lasted for some time, the results being, as might have been expected, most disastrous for the Indians. Piza's organization was broken up, his people scattered, and he became a wanderer till his death.

Let us see how the settlers of the Corral withstood the shock, and then sum up the fruits of Piza's victory.

It was spring. The end of the wet season had come. The waters of the gulches and small streams were gradually subsiding. The birds sang upon the budding trees, the bee sought his favorite flower, the rabbit and hare nibbled the fresh young grass, and the quail whistled in fern and thicket. The Corral, so peaceful and so beautiful, seemed to smile

on each successive morning, as the sun sipped the dewy mantle that covered it like a web of silver. The miners, too, were astir. Rumors of rich deposits, and of vast quantities of gold which the finders were unable to move, filled the air. New mines of fabulous wealth had been discovered. Secret diggings had been struck by a few, and mammoth fortunes dawned before their eyes, as in delusive dreams. The Corral was fully aroused, and the hearts of the pioneers thrilled with joy as they listened to the recital of these wonderful stories. Mules and horses were brought in, large quantities of provisions purchased, pack-saddles examined, ammunition procured, clothes and tools provided, — everything was being put in readiness by the several companies for an early start for the new fields of gold.

There were three respectable looking log-cabins belonging to the group of camps which constituted the settlement in the Corral. They were well roofed, substantially built, and afforded good shelter and protection. The remainder of the dwellings were either of canvas, or walled with logs and canvas covered, and were scattered over the bottoms to within a short distance of the Notch, the main entrance to the Corral. One of these log-cabins was cut off from the rest of the encampment by the Auburn ravine, a rapid stream of water which flowed through

the lower base of the valley. It stood by itself on the opposite bank, and could be safely reached only by the foot-bridge, made from a fallen tree, which spanned the creek directly in a line with the cabin door. This was the Graham party's camp, and was the first log-cabin built in the Corral. They had chosen this peculiar spot with a view to their safety in case of trouble with the Indians, rather than because of the charms which the location was said to possess.

Major Winchester and family were the first to break camp, and were busy all day preparing for an early start the next morning. They were to leave for Deer Creek, some fifty miles north of the Corral, where it was said rich placer diggings had been recently found. To facilitate matters, their covered wagon had been brought up to their cabin door and filled with their household effects. The wagon wheels were also securely locked, and their oxen yoked and chained to the body. As night set in the youngest children were stowed away in the loose bedding in the tail end of the covered wagon. Neighbors from the Flats and friends from the Hollow were down at the Major's to join in an old-fashioned handshake. It seemed to be the wish of the company that the Major and his family should have a good send-off. The Graham party were there, having as usual covered their fire well with wood

before leaving their cabin, that the increasing light might facilitate their return across the foot-bridge in the extreme darkness of the night.

The evening wore pleasantly away. Mrs. Winchester furnished her guests with refreshments, and at intervals busied herself with packing away the remainder of the unneeded cooking utensils before retiring for the night. The Major sat upon a stool in the centre of a group of friends, scratching with a sharp-pointed stick upon the hard, beaten floor the route they should take to reach their new home. The Major's sons, coiled up on the hearth on either side of the fire-place, were busily engaged molding bullets. It seemed they had been authorized to examine the weapons, for standing up and leaning against the chimney were seen half a dozen long-barreled rifles shining as clean and bright as new. Replenished powder-horns hung upon the rafters, bullet-pouches were filled with bright new bullets, newly cut buckskin patches and water-proof caps were neatly packed in the spring boxes in the stock of each rifle. The boys had completed their work, and were packing away their lead and bullet molds, when Andrews, thrusting his head inside the cabin door, said, "Boys, there is trouble of some sort up in the Hollow." "Listen," he added, as the men stepped outside the cabin. "Now, don't that queerish noise sound like some one in distress?"

The party moved rapidly forward in the direction of the increasing cries, sensibly affected by the singular state of affairs in the neighborhood of the Hollow. The night was dark, but starlight and clear. The party, half bewildered at these frightful alarms, had gone perhaps fifty paces in the direction of the trail that lead into the Hollow, when instantly, and as if actuated by one common impulse, they came to a halt. A dark spot was seen to unfold itself and approach them. As it came nearer it took the shape of a long black wall. Silent as death each man stood, and watched this strange apparition as it came nearer and yet nearer.

"By heavens! but those are men!" whispered Anthony.

"Aye, and Indians, too!" gasped Bryant.

"Every man to his cabin!" shouted the major; "and defend them with your lives!" and the whole party broke and fled.

Carter and Graham reached the foot-bridge together, crossed on their hands and knees, gained the cabin, and swung the door wide open. The light from the blazing fire shot out over the bridge, like that from the head-light of a locomotive. They grasped their arms and stood in the shadow of the cabin and covered the bridge with their rifles. In a moment Burns and Wallace sprang upon the bridge and crossed. Realizing the situation, they,

too, seized their rifles and fell into line. Next came Littlefield, who bounded over the bridge like a deer. Now for Bryant! What could detain him? Ah, there he comes, God be praised! But he staggers! Ah, he falls! In an instant he is caught up by Littlefield and Wallace and placed safely within the cabin. The door was then closed and the camp put into a state of defense.

The fire upon the broad hearth continued to burn briskly, the volume of flame roaring and crackling as it went up the chimney and dissolved in the midnight air. The bright, cheerful blaze, threw its mellowing light into the remotest corners of the room, making the actors in this night of trouble easily distinguishable. Carter and Wallace stood on either side of the window, leaning against the wall of the cabin. Their faces were pale but resolute, and while their eyes rested upon the central figure of the group, they were listening attentively for the footsteps which should signal the moment of attack. They were armed with iron crowbars, most formidable weapons in the hands of powerful men. Burns and Littlefield guarded the next weakest point in the cabin, the door, which had been barred and braced with logs of wood. They were armed with heavy pick handles, and stood, like their associates, awaiting the deadly encounter. From their post they ever and anon glanced wistfully in the direction of



THE MIDNIGHT ATTACK ON THE CORRAL.



Graham, who was soothing the last moments of their dying friend. In the centre of the cabin, and stretched upon the floor, lay poor Bryant. He was shot through the body, and the arrow was still buried in him. Graham cut the point off close to his breast and pulled the shaft out from between his shoulders. Poor fellow ! he did not speak. For a few seconds his eyes wandered about the cabin, resting finally upon the dimly burning lantern suspended to the ridge-pole directly over his head. He made two attempts to raise himself upon his elbows, as though he would speak, but they were unsuccessful, and the words which he fain would have spoken died upon his lips as his young life went out forever. Those words were, "Mother ! oh, mother !" How beautiful, and yet how infinitely sad, was the death scene of Jesse Bryant. In the supremest moments of his life, in a strange land, thousands of miles from his New England home, his poor, stricken heart cried for the holy influence of the only friend of his life — and not in vain. The vision that responded to that cry was none other than she whose hallowed name went out with his last breath into the darkness and gloom of the night. Mother, blessed be thy name forever !

For upwards of three long, weary hours, these brave fellows stood guard over the weakest points of their cabin. Not a footstep had been heard, and

as yet they had not been disturbed. Graham got up among the rafters and made a hole in the roof and looked out. The day was dawning. The tinted sky to them was the emblem of peace. It was indeed refreshing, and most gratefully acknowledged. Darkness, however, as yet hung over the Corral. The whip-poor-will was still busy and the owl occasionally exposed his retreat. The rapid little stream went singing along over the rocks and down through the rocky bottoms. The wind moaned and sighed through the forest trees, and the air was filled with fancied noises. The settlement could not be distinguished, and our friends had a strong desire to know the condition of things in that vicinity. Carter, therefore, fired his rifle through the window and listened. An immediate response came whirling through the air from the direction of Major Winchester's. Shortly afterwards two more shots were heard in the direction of the foothills near the Flats. Then, again, a fire was seen burning on the knoll close by the Major's cabin. Men were seen gathering about it from various directions, and they felt assured it was safe to venture out. Their cabin, therefore, was made secure, and, crossing the foot-bridge, in a short time they joined the group around the fire upon the knoll.

The substance of the interview at the Major's can be summed up in a few words : Piza's warriors had

made a raid through the Corral and stripped the settlers of everything they could lay their hands on. Blankets, clothing, and provisions were culled from the deserted camps. Horses, mules, and cattle were driven away, including the Major's oxen tied to the wagon in front of his cabin. The raid had been successful, and the raiders, well laden with booty, had made good their escape.

The loss was a serious one for the settlers. Their stock and supplies were indispensable for an early start for the secret diggings at the head-waters of the Yuba River. If the raiders could not be overtaken and their plunder recovered, the settlers would have to submit to losses which would be most disastrous in their effect on the prospects of many of the company. It was decided to start in pursuit at once.

Whatever were the intentions of the raiders in their descent upon the Corral, it was quite evident that their plans were in a measure frustrated. It was conceded by all, that a general massacre had been averted by the unusual gathering at the Major's and the lateness of the hour to which the social pleasures had been prolonged. The sun was about an hour high when the miners from the Corral started in pursuit of Piza's braves. The trail was easily found, for thirty head of cattle and horses driven at their utmost speed leave no indistinct trail

behind. The raiders' intentions were to reach their camp before dark. The pursuers' purpose was to prevent this. The former had three hours the start, but were hampered with plunder and the care of the stock. The latter were in light marching order, and besides, were stimulated by motives which could not be overestimated.

At noon the raiders were overtaken and surrounded. They were discovered by a light smoke seen to arise from a deep cañon where they had halted for rest. It was evident to the pursuers that in assaulting the Indians' position they must lose either the Indians or their spoils. The noise and confusion of a sudden attack, the cracking of rifles and the savage yells of a surprised enemy, must surely stampede the stock and allow the prize to escape which had so providentially been placed within their grasp. The raiders had failed to estimate the white men's pluck and endurance, hence while lounging about their temporary camp in fancied security, they started to their feet to find their lives in danger, and their ill-gotten gains wrenched from their hands in sight of the valley in which was the stronghold of the tribe. The return to the Corral that evening was an event long to be remembered. The poor jaded animals were only too glad to reach their old quarters again, and the triumphant party were equally glad to accept the much needed repose.

The following day the Graham company and two others belonging to the Corral were called upon to perform a painful duty, namely, to bury their dead. Poor Bryant, it would seem, stayed behind on the night of the raid, to assist the Major rescue his children from the bed in the wagon. He could not ignore their cries, and seizing the youngest, who stood upon the tail-board in her night-dress, was in the act of passing her through the cabin window into her mother's arms when the fatal arrow struck him. Jesse Bryant was a brave man, and a bright and cheerful associate. He was a gentleman of the best description, and a most inflexible friend. He was missed, terribly missed, by his surviving associates. He received a royal burial, as he deserved, and the monument under which his rude casket was laid will stand for ages after his body has returned to dust and ashes.

It was about the first of April, 1850, that the Graham company took leave of the Spanish Corral. They were splendidly equipped and bountifully supplied for their contemplated trip to the Yuba River. They crossed the Flats and then took the bridle-path which led up over the western ridge. It was their purpose to follow the two belts of timber land skirting the prairie, and avoid the Indians on the upper Bear River. As the pack-train reached the ridge overlooking the Corral they came to a halt, that they

might take a last look at the old Spanish Corral. It would have been impossible for these men to separate themselves from their old camp-ground without some feelings of sadness. If the experiences of the past winter had been bitter, in some respects, in others they had been pleasant ; for many acquaintances had been formed, among which were some whom it was an honor to have known, and whom they were proud to acknowledge. Their eyes followed along down the bottoms of the basin. There were the deserted camps with their chimneys still standing. The broad, level valley was torn and rent, and the gulches and ravines mangled and disfigured. The once rapid stream was now dry ; its singing waters had gone over its bed never again to return. Yonder stood their own log-cabin and the foot-bridge that led to it. There were the mammoth oaks with their ponderous arms stretching far out over the bluffs, and the tall pines through which the wind sighed and moaned in the long winter nights. On the rise in the centre of a cluster of fir-trees stood the granite boulder under whose shadow their friend and associate slept his last sleep. He had shared with them the discomforts of a long voyage at sea, submitted cheerfully to every privation encountered in their pilgrimage to the mines, met all difficulties as they arose with manly courage, and now he must be left behind, his grave unknown,

his record unchiseled ; he must remain the only human tenant in this camp of desolation and ruin. With uncovered heads and hearts touched with pain they bade their slumbering comrade and deserted camp farewell.

CHAPTER VIII.

SEEKING WEALTH UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

"The coffin bore his name, that those
Of other years might know,
When earth its secret should disclose
Whose bones were laid below.

"We only heard the winter's wind,
In many a sullen gust,
As o'er the open grave inclined,
We murmured, 'Dust to dust.'"

BOWLES.

TWELVE men and twelve heavily laden pack-mules, exhausted from a long day's march, halted, as the night closed in, on one of the numerous bars formed by the waters of the South Yuba. These composed the Graham company, which had been enlarged to its present dimensions for prudential reasons. Beyond the rocks and sands and driftwood which covered the bar, and partially screened by a light growth of beech and maples, was a piece of tableland of peculiar shape and of marvelous beauty. It was covered by a thick body of clover and grass, intermixed with flowers of various hues and fragrance. A stream of water, sparkling and cold as ice, danced over the rocks and plunged down steep declivities into boiling pools, and then, rushing

madly down the tangled slopes, lost itself in the Yuba. Trees of mammoth proportions stood like frowning guardsmen. Drooping willows of singular grace and beauty kissed the earth with their foliage. Massive rocks and hills and mountains formed a background, and these were covered with shrubs, heavy timber, and perpetual snow. Precipitous peaks and lofty summits glistened in the noonday sun like pillars of solid gold. Indeed, it were impossible to exaggerate the loveliness of this wild and uncultivated lawn, or the magnificence and grandeur of the surrounding scenery.

The company took possession of this romantic spot, and christened it Eagle Roost. The name was suggested by the numbers of those birds which nightly hovered over their camp, and took refuge among the dizzy crags on the mountain steeps. Here they built a most substantial log-cabin. It was to be their grand base to which, in case of sickness on the route, or disaster befalling the expedition, they could fall back and find both shelter and supplies.

It was about the first of June that the party left the camp and proceeded on their hazardous journey to the great gold deposits at the sources of the Yuba River. In the early mining days it was a common belief that the gold taken from the beds of the streams was deposited there by the impetuosity

of the waters during the flood seasons caused by rains and dissolving snows. The supposition seemed to be verified by the fact that the gold increased in coarseness as the heads of the rivers were neared. Hence it was believed by the earliest pioneers that to reach the source from whence flowed these untold riches was to reach and possess a fortune, — a delusion for which thousands paid bitterly, — a vision which decoyed many a brave heart to an untimely grave.

As the Graham party passed through one of these great trials and suffered proportionately with others engaged in similar exploits, the events of the next thirty days will be followed with deep interest. It was a novel sight to witness this long train of men and animals breaking a path along the steep sides and up the ragged mountain slopes. It was a grand and exhilarating struggle, which the party seemed to enjoy, for the woods and gulches resounded with their songs and jests. The hills and valleys, like other portions of the country passed through, abounded with game. Several bears, disturbed by the heavy rocks which, rolling from their beds, went crashing through their lairs to the bottoms, were forced out into plain view, when, after taking in the situation, they plunged into the river, and swimming with the current, landed safely on the opposite side, apparently uninjured by the volley of bullets discharged from the prospectors' rifles.

They continued to follow the "ribs" until they reached the "backbone" of the Sierra Nevada. The backbone, commonly so called, was the ridges which separated the two rivers, and was the pathway to the heads of the different streams. The party now struck out, keeping in view the great seam which indicated the bed of the river at whose source lay waiting the consummation of their earthly desires.

The country for many miles around them opened up a varied picture of extreme beauty and loveliness. The trees were of immense size, wonderfully symmetrical, and grew to great heights. The notches and passes in the mountains afforded continual food for speculation. Boulders of mammoth proportions stood here and there, and like angry giants seemed to dispute an advance. In some cases they were so nicely adjusted, so equally poised, that it seemed as if a sudden gust of wind would topple them over and send them whirling and crashing down the mountain steeps into the chasm below. The gulches and cañons through which they passed were picturesque and fanciful. The waters were clear and sparkling, rushing madly down ragged stairways, roaring and foaming with savage speed along their rocky beds. The timber grew sparser as they neared the snowy regions. The Sierra Nevadas became more conspicuous. The solemnity and grandeur, hitherto but partially seen, now burst upon

them in all their glory, — a magnificent sight, beautiful and yet terribly grand.

Traveling on *terra firma* in the Sierra Nevadas with a train of heavily laden pack-mules is one thing, but traveling in deep snow, with like accompaniments, is quite another. As the company advanced the snow grew deeper and deeper. The animals sank, plunged, and wallowed in it. Harnesses gave way, pack-saddles were loosened, and provisions were broken open and scattered about them. The animals became stiff and jaded, and the men annoyed and discouraged. The train halted and the company went into council.

The prospectors had met the first obstacle of importance since leaving the Corral. They had yet fifty miles to go. This was the only practicable route, and they possessed all the means which were to be procured to bridge the distance. They must either surmount this difficulty or abandon the enterprise. This question kept the company before the camp-fire until the moon, which had risen out of the vastness of snow on one side, disappeared in the darkness on the other. It was decided that three of the company should move in advance of the main body, and lay out and designate the route, while the remainder were to follow on as rapidly as possible, taking advantage of the snow crusts nights and mornings. With ordinary luck it was believed the

pathfinders would reach their destination within four days, and the main body, with ample allowances, would not fail to unite with them in at least twice that time. Bradbury, Carter, and Graham volunteered to perform this mission. Preparations were at once made, and the trio took leave of their associates the next morning. They were accompanied by Dobbin Grey, a sure-footed and faithful horse. A sled was improvised from braided fir boughs, on which were carefully packed their supplies and rifles. This was attached to Dobbin's pack-saddle, and proved of invaluable assistance to both man and beast. Mattresses were made from hemlock and spruce twigs, on which blankets were spread, and a tolerable night's sleep enjoyed. Hearths of wood were laid in the snow, upon which food and coffee were prepared before a huge crackling fire. Nothing could exceed their enjoyment as they wended their way up and down the glassy steeps and through the intricate chasms of eternal snows.

On the morning of the fourth day the great seam which they had followed came abruptly to an end, the mountains closing in all around in the form of a horseshoe. The descent to the river was indeed trying, and oftentimes accompanied with extreme danger. The distance traversed to reach the bottom was several miles, and the slopes so nearly perpendicular, that it was found necessary to fasten a

small tree to Dobbin's pack-saddle to prevent his falling headlong to destruction. If you had witnessed the sagacity old Dobbin displayed in his efforts to avert the impending danger you would have laughed and marveled, for the moment the trail became impracticable by the natural way, he would create a diversion by substituting the other end. But, thank Heaven, their task was at length accomplished. The supreme purpose of their fondest hopes lay before their eyes and was fairly won. It was only a question of time whether they would be fully compensated for their faith and endurance. Three days' inspection of the vaults, which nature had built with such consummate skill, changed their views and chilled them to the bone. The source of this river unfolded a picture sufficiently terrifying to frighten away his Satanic Majesty, and to have justified him in pronouncing it the quintessence of six infernal regions boiled down into one. The space it occupied among the world's exhibits of horrors was nothing compared to its significance as a natural curiosity. The walls of black slate were almost perpendicular, and so high that the sun was visible only from eleven till two ; the rest of the day was cold and shadowy, the nights long, wearisome, and of inky blackness. The supply streams came down precipitous cañons which were as death-like and inaccessible as the frozen summits two

thousand feet above. The beds of these streams were paved with rocks and boulders, among which the waters plunged with furious rage. Viewed from the most favorable circumstances, it seemed but an exiled tomb from nature's creation, out of which came that steady, irksome sound, — the deep, sullen roar of the never-ceasing river. Not a shrub, not a spear of grass, not even a weed was to be found ; not sufficient stubble to build a bird's-nest ; not earth enough to bed a rattlesnake.

The sides of the various streams were carefully examined, but they failed to discover any gold ; and as they eat their last meal of pancakes, and sipped their last drop of coffee, they were forced to admit the probable failure of the expedition. If nature had chosen such places as this to hoard her treasures, she had very likely placed them beyond the reach of man. With these dark forebodings resting heavily upon them they rolled themselves in their blankets and lay down to sleep and dream.

On the morning of the sixth day their provisions gave out, and for the first time a shadow of fear and alarm crept over them, while a perceptible anxiety for the arrival of the company grew stronger and stronger. As the day advanced they exerted themselves to appear calm, and watched and listened for some signal of the company's arrival. But as night closed in, their suspicions took the form of positive

fear, and there was no mistaking each other's views or feelings. That something had befallen the company, and they were abandoned to their fate, was beyond a doubt. They were destitute of food, and had no means of procuring any, and, beside, a long, dangerous march lay before them. Something must be done to relieve their present extremity and provide them with subsistence for their return journey. What could be done, was the all important question for them to decide. Frenzied with disappointment, horrified with fear of starvation, and death staring them in the face, what should they do? To leave this God-forsaken place and live, was a desire which required but little hesitation to become a law of necessity — Dobbin Grey must die! He must die that they might live. The thought, so revolting when first suggested, became tempered with continued fasting, and aversion gave way to the cravings of hunger. Poor old Dobbin, their faithful friend and associate, was sacrificed, his flesh hung over their camp-fire to smoke and dry. Upon this they must subsist or perish. Preparations for their return trip were at once completed, and with reduced baggage they abandoned these realms of darkness with feelings of gladness and relief.

The sun had disappeared behind the long row of frozen peaks, and the evening was fast closing in upon the deep caverns which lay between the mount-

ains of snow and ice. The three weary pathfinders halted and prepared their camp for the night. Carter was ill. The long, tedious journey was fast breaking up these men of iron constitutions. The violent exercise, the great bodily strain, was gradually undermining their courage, and they retired for the night overwhelmed with the difficulties of their situation. It was the evening of the third day. They had lost the trail early in the journey, and as yet had failed to find it. They had labored all day long under the conviction that they were hopelessly lost in the snow-beds of the Sierras. The next day they followed the sun in its course, hoping by night to retrieve in a measure the error so unfortunately made. Carter's illness continued, and they felt alarmed and uneasy. It became necessary to support and brace him up to his work, and yet in the face of this new discouragement they moved steadily along, sad but hopeful. The scenes which had but a few days before filled them with enthusiasm, were now as a blighted grave-yard, and in every summit they saw a Banquo's ghost to haunt them through their dreary march. The moaning of the wind through the forest, the echo of their voices in the mountain glens, which were to them such sweet and fairy-like music, now became the mourner's dirge and the harbingers of some dreadful visitation.

The fifth day brought them glad tidings and great

joy. They had struck the trail, but were so exhausted that they could scarcely move one foot before the other. Carter's condition had become painful and dangerous. Toward night he declared he could go no farther. He was hopelessly used up, and neither Graham nor Bradbury could do anything to induce him to make another effort. He begged his comrades to leave him and push on the settlement for help. "Boys," said he, as they clasped each other's hands in this painful separation, "If you have strength, push on till you find the company, and God speed you. I shall look for you, Frank, as long as I have life. If I am gone when you return, and you love me, carry me back to the Yuba and let me sleep beneath the willow behind the cabin. Take this watch and chain, Frank; yes, and this ring, too, and when you return home, go to the village of Kinderhook and find my poor old mother. Give her these, Frank, and tell her — tell her" — He could not finish the sentence, but placing his hands over his eyes burst into tears. He was rolled up carefully in his blankets and laid upon a bed of spruce and cedars. Each man stooped and kissed him, and said with difficulty: "Good-by, Dave." Bradbury and Graham then pushed on with increased speed. They felt sure the company could not be far from where they were. The suspicion that would from time to time arise in their feverish



LEFT TO HIS FATE — "GOOD-BYE, DAVE"

minds, that perhaps they were abandoned and left to perish, could not be entertained for a moment. It was an injustice to men like Wallace, Littlefield, and Burns. Darkness was closing around them. They were wet through and benumbed with cold. Faint and exhausted as they were, they were still terribly in earnest to save their comrade's life. An exclamation of surprise from Bradbury, who had reached the summit of the hill in advance of Graham, was followed by another still louder, announcing a bright light upon an elevation in the direction where the camp of their associates was most likely to be. Yes, this was surely the beacon-light which the company had built to tell them where they could be found. "O propitious light! O friend in need!" burst from the lips of these men, nearly dead with hunger and fatigue. How quickly it infused new life into their bodies! How easily were the difficulties hitherto considered insurmountable disposed of, and victory achieved! Nothing could exceed the genuineness of the reception which, for a few minutes, overwhelmed Bradbury and Graham as they were discovered by the company hobbling into camp. But when informed of Carter's condition and probable fate, a change as correspondingly swift and sincere came over them, and the camp immediately became the scene of wild excitement.

Carter's immediate associates were deeply affected,

especially Wallace, who refused to be comforted, and spent the balance of the night in gloom and silence. Not so with Littlefield and Burns : they kept the camp-fire ablaze and filled their canteens with hot, nourishing drinks ; they heated blankets and rolled them up tightly ; they selected warm clothing to cover his body, dry hose and easy boots to protect his feet ; and when the party left to rescue their perishing friend, they were provided with substantial remedies to restore him to life.

The pathfinders' trail was easily found and the party followed it with great vigilance. The darkened hollows and sombre passes were examined foot by foot. Rifles were discharged announcing their near approach. Loud, encouraging shouts rang out from hill-tops and caverns. The warm rays of the sun were beginning to penetrate the dark recesses of the mountain passes when the party came abruptly upon the spot where Carter lay. They saw his couch from the hill-side as they went swinging down into the bottom, and were so startled for an instant that each man stood in his tracks as it were to catch his breath. Then there went up such a hearty cheer that the sound went echoing along through the neighboring cañons. But ere the sound had left their lips, they bounded down the hill and with one impetuous cry of joy gathered about their silent comrade. But alas, they were too late ; their

remedies useless ; their caresses wasted. Their friend and associate was dead. There he lay, the blankets still covering his body and his heavy winter blouse wound tightly about him. His head was half buried in the snow, and his hair frozen to his face and ears. A thin coating of ice covered his long, full beard, and his fingers were woven together under his chin. His body was packed in snow and laid upon an improvised sled, and when everything had been properly arranged the cortege returned to camp.

Carter was a marked man, — a man of splendid physique, pure in soul, and strong in Christian faith, — a man of few words, dignified, and brave. He was the accepted head of the company, and his loss to the organization was irreparable. The influence he exerted and the peculiar charm he possessed arose partly from his love of music. His full rich voice was heard at the opening of each Sunday morn, and in the peaceful calm of the Sabbath eve.

“ God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.”

How this beautiful old hymn would ring out, and every heart that heard it seemed touched as with a coal of fire. Lips unwont to sing yielded to its magic power, and the whole camp joined in the song of praise to God.

A formal meeting of the Graham company was called to take such action as might seem best with reference to their deceased associate and friend. It was a little singular that this meeting should have taken place on the first anniversary of their organization. But such was the fact, and the four surviving members gathered round the body of their late comrade and reviewed the painful calendar of the year that was passed. The fatal consequences attending them as an organization was feelingly referred to, and the terrible sufferings which had closed the life of their esteemed friend were keenly felt and bitterly deplored. Their relations to the present expedition were carefully and freely discussed, and then came a question of great importance to them. Under existing circumstances, what were to be their relations towards each other, weakened as they were in numbers, and poor in purse? Up to this time, they had accomplished but little. All they possessed in the world had been invested in the success or failure of this enterprise. If successful, the achievement was too grand to estimate, while a failure would be but a check, perhaps a defeat, but not a disaster. Bradbury and Graham's report of what they saw, and what they did not see at the source of the river would not, it was said, be accepted, and the company as a body were bound "to see it out." Should their organization continue

distinct in the future, or should they dissolve and consolidate with the other company? Wallace expressed a desire to withdraw from the company. It was his purpose to abandon the mines, and seek his fortune in the marts of trade. Graham wished to return with the body of their deceased friend to the Roost, and stay there till the company returned. The Graham company was accordingly declared disbanded. Littlefield and Burns joined the main company, and Wallace and Graham returned to the Yuba.

David Carter was buried at the Roost on the banks of the South Yuba, July 12, 1850. His remains were not deposited under the willow behind the cabin, as he had requested, because, as subsequent events proved, they would not have been safe. A butt of a hollow pine, with the ends securely closed, made a safe and enduring burial case. His remains were placed in a seam in the bed-rock which formed the base of Eagle Mountain. An oaken slab, rough hewn, with the inscription burnt deeply into the wood, made a head-board, which was nailed to a tree over his grave. This completed their last duty, and to this tomb of solid rock they surrendered the body of their dead friend.

Thirty years have passed since Carter died on the snow-clad summits of the Sierra Nevadas and his dying request to be buried at the Roost was faith-

fully fulfilled ; and now the survivor of that brave company consecrates these imperfect memoirs to the memory of the hallowed dead. His hair has since then whitened with passing years, and bodily infirmities have crept in with the lapse of time. Now, with his declining strength and the ripening of threescore years upon him, fond memory takes him back to the land of sunshine and flowers. The scenes of other days rise up full and real, and from the fullness of his heart he weeps over and sanctifies the graves of the sacred dead.

The expedition returned to the Roost in September, broken and demoralized. The hidden treasures — if there were any — were buried too deep to be reached. They were obliged to abandon everything but their personal effects, and the mining season for that year closed, forcing them into winter quarters poor and discouraged. Ah, gold, thou art a wily tempter, bewitching as the light to the moth, but dazzling only to lead astray !

CHAPTER IX.

THE RIPPLE SPRING HOUSE.

Ripple and dance, thou sweet little stream,
Laughing so sprightly in midsummer's beam,
With fairy-like music and sweet pretty song
Entrancing the senses the whole day long, —
Dance by the moonlight, dance in thy dream,
Murmur and sparkle, thou beautiful stream.

Of all those companions that drank from thy rill
As they sat in the shade on the moss-covered hill,
Not one now remains to rejoin me again
To enroll thee in song or rejoice in thy fame :
Enshrined in my heart is thy murmuring song, —
Ah, sing little songster, forever sing on.

How oft the poor emigrant, overburdened with heat,
Fell down from exhaustion and slept at thy feet,
Quenched his deep thirst, and rising again,
Pursued his long journey, o'er mountain and plain ;
Bubble and laugh, thou pure little spring,
And nourish the violets that bloom on thy brim.

THE AUTHOR.

IN the rough-and-tumble days of '49 and '50, and perhaps we may include '51, the hotels, so called, which dotted the different roads connecting the marts of trade with the mines were many and distinct. They were rudely constructed, most simply furnished, and grotesque even to ugliness. They were patterned after every age and style, and ranged from a low bush shanty to a high wall tent with an

awning. All sorts of devices were used, and every effort made to extol each house and decoy the "weary wayfarer" to stop and dine. Furniture was unknown at the wayside inns in those days, and China dishes as scarce as rain-drops between May and November. Every man carried his own bed-clothes and made up his bed where night overtook him. If his means were exhausted he stretched himself upon the ground and forgot that such a luxury as a rawhide bunk was purchasable so near at hand. The teamster, freighting goods between the city of Sacramento and Nevada, or points above, selected his stopping-places from necessity rather than choice, — that is, he would give his preference to that house which would best equalize the day's labor for himself and animals. On his return trip, however, he often remained where he "loved not wisely but too well."

The Ripple Spring House was a popular place of resort to the great carrying trade on that route, and likewise a favorite wayside inn for the casual muleteer as well as the wayfarer in general. Built upon a slight elevation a little back from the road, and flanked by a heavy growth of timber, it held a commanding view of the great thoroughfare between the city of Sacramento and the central northern mines. In style the building was a little in advance of the times, the location, perhaps, giving it a more

imposing appearance. But, beyond this, it was about the same as other houses claiming to be first-class wayside inns. Wooden benches, clumsy tables, rudely arranged sleeping apartments, were the main features — improved and beautified according to the mechanical skill and taste of the owner. The frame, with a pitch roof, was light and delicate but substantially braced. Its dimensions were about forty by sixty feet, and the roof was covered with heavy white canvas. The spring from which the house derived its name was perpetual, coming out from under a ledge of rocks about fifty feet above the house, and flowing down a deep gully till it was lost in the woods.

This spring of water the proprietors had turned to a variety of uses, each of which was in itself a positive benefit to the house. By a very simple contrivance a portion of the stream was forced along the hill-side into a shallow well, under a shady tree by the roadside, the overflow passing into and through another underground pipe for some distance, and then leaping down into a large watering trough in front of the hotel door. The balance of the spring was conducted into the house by similar means and utilized for special purposes, when the whole, uniting again at the foot of the hill, flowed into a large basin arranged for the use of cattle. There was, therefore, water upon the hill-

side for the weary emigrant, there was water for the jaded horse and mule, and water in abundance for the thirsty ox covered with dust and exhausted with fatigue. Thus the wayfarer, resting in the sleepy calmness of a summer's night, listened to the rippling songs of these ever busy streams. Every teamster, therefore, having the welfare of his team at heart, harnessed out at the Ripple Spring House, for, in addition to the superior accommodations which the house afforded, he felt sure of assistance in raising the "hump" so much dreaded by every whip upon the road.

The "hump" so called was the sharp, rugged hill where the house stood. The ascent was but trivial, — scarcely three hundred feet, a mere ant-hill compared with many to be encountered. But its steepness and wretched condition was what made its ascent so difficult and caused such a corresponding dread.

A jaded team, then, on arriving at the "hump" and showing signs of weakness, would scarcely attempt the ascent alone, but would wait until another came up, when they would "double up," and the two "snake the load along as if 't were but a bale o' hay." So night after night a score of teams might have been seen here harnessed out and at rest. There one might have seen a magnificent six mule team with bear-skin collars and jingling bells; there,

also, the heavy ox team with their broad, handsome shoulders, and brass tipped and polished horns. Here was the Buckeye "gig" with its quaint top and sweeping sides, and yonder the Arkansas "jigger" with its long narrow body resting high in the air, resembling a bridge on wheels. Take it all together, it was a singularly mixed crowd that nightly gathered about the Ripple Spring House in the fall and winter of '50 and '51.

About the middle of an afternoon in October a light team with a span of horses drew up to the watering-trough before the hotel door. As it did so, one of the occupants sprang out and loosened the check reins, and at the same moment sang out, in a somewhat familiar manner, "Halloo, Graham, how are ye!"

A young man responded to that query by stepping quickly from under the awning, and with a smile of recognition playing upon his face, replied, "Why, Major Winchester! bless me, how do you do?" at the same time extending his hand to his old friend and wife, and then to the boys.

A moment later Burns and Littlefield came forward and gave the callers a cordial welcome.

"No, thank ye," expostulated the Major, "we can't get out. It is too late, and we must get home to-night. We are ever so much obliged to you, but we can't stop to tea."

"Well, Littlefield," continued the Major, in a joking sort of a way, "we didn't get down to the dedication."

"So it seems," merrily laughed Tully. "You can never know how much you were missed, Major, or the opportunity lost to air your classical talents."

"Invite me to the next reopening," laughed the Major, "and I will not fail to respond."

"You have a nice place here, Mr. Burns," said Mrs. Winchester, interrupting them.

"I am glad you like it," answered the Doctor, raising his hat with a polite bow. "Thank you for the compliment."

"Why, yes, indeed ; quite a fashionable affair, I assure you," suggested the Major's son with a broad grin upon his face, which put the party in excellent spirits.

"Can't say I like that flag much," mused the Major, casting his eyes up to a wretchedly poor imitation of the Stars and Stripes nailed to a staff on the end of the building.

"Cherish the principles which it symbolizes," put in Tully ; "we'll have a better one by the time you call again."

"I don't see that bay-window, Graham, your letter pictured so wonderfully," said Mrs. Winchester, reproachfully.

"Very true," replied Frank. "I am sorry, but

the omission has been compromised by enlarging the doors."

At this retort the group settled into a prolonged laugh.

"Yes, mother," broke in the Major, his face still red with excitement; "I have been looking about also for that balcony."

"Well," replied Graham, assuming an air of injured dignity, "that article was left out purely by mutual consent; the edifice being considered so imposing — so far in advance of the civilized condition of the country — that to add such embellishments was, to say the least, imprudent if not dangerous. Such fears as mistaking it for a monastery by the many wandering monks, and its legitimate purposes assailed if not subverted, has been regarded by us as neither inconsistent nor entirely to be ignored."

"Well done, Graham," broke in the Major, clapping his hands, in which the whole party joined. "Well, boys, I hope you will do well here," added the Major sincerely; "you have started right, and we often hear good reports of you up at the Creek."

"What have you done with the upper part of your house, Mr. Graham?" asked Mrs. Winchester, who enjoyed this refreshing scene, and seemed reluctant to lose the opportunity to put in a pun.

"I am only one third to blame for the concessions

made to the architect and builder of this establishment," replied Frank, with a mischievous look in his eye, pointing his thumb over his shoulder at his two chums. "On matters of such importance we have always been unanimous. We listened in this case to *superior* minds, and frankly accepted the *builder's* advice to allow the *upper story* of the structure to remain unfinished. As yet there have been no calls for suites of rooms, and the times are not sufficiently ripe, they thought, for summer boarders, they would wait."

"The furniture, I suppose, corresponds in every respect with the general make-up," sarcastically suggested the Major as he gathered up the reins and reached forward after his whip.

"Oh, yes," answered Tully; "every article is entirely new."

"Made to order, of course," said Mrs. Winchester, unable to restrain her mirth.

"Certainly," answered Burns with a laugh; "every piece is original and the patterns destroyed."

"Profusely ornamental," chimed in the Major's son, giggling as he lit his cigar."

"Yes, Dan," retorted Graham, "quite so, and although free from the gaudy tinsels too often seen among flashy hotels and cheap restaurants, they have already attracted so much attention as to give them a wor'd-wide reputation."

"Drive on, father;" said Mrs. Winchester, laughing immoderately. "Ah, Graham, you are as subtle as a parish priest. Let us hope you will plead *before*, and not from *behind* a bar, at no distant day."

"I'll take that scarf, Frank," said Dan, the Major's son, pleadingly; "give it to me as a souvenir which shall signify that with all my faults you love me still."

"I would do that in a moment, Dan, but for one thing," answered Graham, "it is a keepsake from my sister Mary."

"So much the better," suggested Dan, trying to reach the article, twisted loosely about Graham's neck.

"Give me the scarf, Frank, and I'll marry Mary, and so keep the heirloom still in the family."

"All right, brother-in-law," replied Graham; "take it." And the team drove off amid cheers and good-byes.

Two hours later the loaded teams began to gather in and about the Ripple Spring House, and the usual stir and bustle accompanied the preparations for supper. Hungry animals were watered and fed, camp-fires lighted, and blankets spread for the night. The usual busy scenes were witnessed that night as they had been on many previous evenings. It had got to be about ten o'clock when the last guest retired to his bunk. The curtained door was dropped,

the side lights put out, and the house declared closed for the night. The large lantern was still burning in the reception room, and a small bracket lamp burnt dimly over the dining-room door. The proprietors were seated in the cook-room. All at once footsteps were heard approaching the house from the direction of the hill, and shortly after a voice was heard to cry : " Ho there, landlord ! "

Littlefield answered the call. " You are late, gentlemen," remarked Tully, as the two wayfarers walked in and seated themselves upon some bags of grain.

" You are right, landlord," replied the first speaker. " It is rather late, but not too late, I hope, for a night's lodgings and a bite of something to eat."

" Oh, no ; I believe there is one more section left. The supper, however, I must ask you to take with a grain of salt."

" Call it a glass of brandy and water, landlord," put in the other speaker, " and we'll accept your terms."

" All right, sir," replied Littlefield, as he placed the tumblers and decanter containing the article called for before them. " Now, gentlemen," continued Tully, as his eyes followed the tumblers of raw liquor to the lips of his guests, " register your names, please, and I will attend to preparing your supper."

“Let us have the supper, landlord, and dispense with the registering,” sharply broke in the first speaker. “There seems no occasion for it here, at least.”

“The country where you are from,” retorted Littlefield, “would regard such refusals with just suspicion.”

“I beg your pardon, landlord,” hastily broke in the second speaker, determined to support his friend; “you are a little off your base. It is not even a compulsory measure there. It has been adopted simply as a mark of courtesy to the guest, and introduced as a system by the proprietors.”

“We make it compulsory here, sir,” answered Littlefield, “and enforce it. You can do just as you choose,” continued Tully; “register your names or seek some other accommodations.”

The two men looked sharply into each other's eyes for a moment, and then going forward signed their names. The first man that signed his name uncovered an injured hand, which was wrapped up in a peculiar figured scarf saturated with blood. As he laid the pen down, he cast a quick, scornful look into the face of Littlefield, and expressed his regrets for his inability to make the signature more distinct and natural. The second signer dashed off his name and took a seat, remarking, sneeringly, that nothing equaled a one-horse hotel-keeper for bombast and conceited arrogance.

Burns and Graham remained within the cook-room, attentive listeners. There was nothing in particular about these men to have attracted much attention had they applied for accommodations in seasonable hours. It is true their manners were rude and insulting; perhaps that fed a natural distrust which the lateness of the hour created. But otherwise they were genteel in appearance, quite affable, and dressed in the usual miner's garb. They had, they said, been drinking heavily, which seemed to account for the scratches on their faces, and the filthy condition of their hair and clothes. But, on the whole, Tully Littlefield had become alarmed, and his large blue eyes never for a moment left them. The sight of the scarf, so innocently exposed, wrapped about the wounded hand still dripping with blood, added to the distrust which their appearance had from the beginning produced, and now his fears were awakened, and dark suspicions filled his mind.

Littlefield, suppressing his feelings, accompanied his guests into the dining-room, and carelessly leaning against the cook-room door, keenly watched the faces of his associates for such evidence as would either dispel his doubts or confirm his fears. Burns passed in with a dish of sliced ham and a platter of biscuits. The hand with the crimson bandage was raised. The Doctor glanced from the hand into the

face and eyes of its owner, then at the hand again, and drawing a long breath withdrew to the side-board. He had observed the bleeding hand, but had failed to recognize the scarf. Not so with Graham. The moment the injured hand was raised his countenance underwent a change. It no longer wore an expression of cold indifference, but became pale and excited. For a while his gaze fastened upon the scarf wound tightly about the bleeding hand, and then removed them only to fix it upon the wearer's face ; then, for a few seconds, he turned his head aside in a sort of painful reverie, and finally looked full into the anxious face of Tully Littlefield. The look, the instant interchange of thought between these two, was mutual. The expression of one seemed to say to the other, Do you recognize your scarf?—while the other seemed to reply, Yes, and it must be regained.

Frank Graham had made a discovery,—a discovery beyond the recognition of his scarf,—a discovery, which, if his suspicions were correct, might involve him in difficulties which would test his friendship to the core. This discovery, so singular, so inauspicious as to cause a chill to run through him, was that the wounded man was the brother of his affianced wife, Philip Rugby, of Rugby Farm. He must keep his discovery to himself, and for the moment deal only with the wounded hand which

had brought within their house such dark forebodings of evil.

"Can I assist you, sir," inquired Graham, with a voice somewhat agitated.

"Well, no, my friend — I believe not — unless you can stop this hand from bleeding."

"I will dress it for you after supper, sir, and wash out the bandage, too, if you would like to have me."

"Thank you, I shall be only too glad to accept your services."

There was a deep cut across the palm of the hand, which would leave a scar and three disabled fingers. Not a question was asked by either party — but each sat silent while the operation was being performed, and were only too glad when it was finished. Graham seized the scarf and rolling it carelessly up laid it in the basin of water and started for the cook-room. The pleasure he experienced at having secured the scarf, which was the key to the solution of the whole mystery, was apparent at least to Littlefield, if not to Doctor Burns.

"If that slug, young man, will convince you of our lasting obligations," remarked the wounded man's friend, "take it;" and he tossed a fifty dollar gold piece upon the table.

"Nothing could induce me, sir, to take your money," answered Graham, firmly. "I have done no

more for your friend than what either of you would gladly do for me."

A pause of some seconds ensued, when the guests arose, and turning upon their heels, bowed politely, and said, "Good-night."

When Burns returned, after seeing these men to their beds, he found Littlefield and Graham engaged in earnest conversation. They had examined the scarf, and found, as Graham had predicted, the initials of his name embroidered on one end, and those of his sister on the other. When last seen, this scarf was tied about the neck of Daniel Winchester. Within a few hours it had come back to the giver under suspicious circumstances and saturated with blood. The signatures of these men, then, were unquestionably assumed, their manners a sham, their assertions false. The circumstances told strongly against them, and the proprietors were quite alarmed for the safety of the Winchester family. That the Major had been violently handled, possibly robbed and murdered, by the very men who had taken refuge within their door, was possible if not probable. The situation was, indeed, embarrassing. What should they do in the premises? To detain these men until the Major's safety could be assured was their duty, their purpose, and their determination. It was considered advisable to take into their counsel two responsible teamsters who

had patronized their house since its completion. It would seem better for all concerned, they thought, to add to their own two unprejudiced minds and two impartial judgments.

The mysterious wayfarers, who had retired the night before apparently unconscious of approaching danger, were startled, on opening their eyes in the early dawn, to find themselves surrounded by a posse of armed men. Neither spoke, but springing up in their bunks fastened their eyes upon their jailers with an expression of sudden fear and alarm.

"Gentlemen," began Littlefield, in a singularly steady voice, "we mean you no harm, but we have business with you."

"Well, sir, what is it?" calmly inquired the man with the wounded hand.

"You are suspected of murder and robbery," continued Littlefield; "and you must now consider yourselves under arrest."

"Murder and robbery!" echoed the man. "What an absurdity!"

"Why did n't you perform this duty before we retired?" suggested his friend, warmly, with a contemptuous smile playing about his mouth.

"Because we had not sufficient evidence of your guilt then, sir," quietly responded Littlefield.

"Then we are to understand you possess that proof this morning. Is it so?"

"Yes, we have what we consider sufficient reasons to detain you."

"Let us see this damning proof," he demanded, in an insolent manner. Littlefield held out the bloody scarf. "Why, sir, that belongs to me. It is the bandage left in your care to be washed."

"A most wonderful discovery!" ironically laughed his friend. "Do they hang men here for being the owners of twenty-five-cent neckties?"

Both men laughed heartily, and turning upon the group, said in the most approved style: "Gentlemen, we are very sorry this dirty rag should cause such a sea of trouble. The tragedy so auspiciously opened has, it would seem, fizzled into a comedy of errors. If the performance has not multiplied your assets, the fault rests with the managers, not with the actors."

"All's well that ends well," remarked Tully, with a significant nod of the head. "Will you please tell us," he resumed, "how you came by this 'dirty rag,' as you are pleased to call it?"

"Certainly. It is a part of my wardrobe. I don't recollect just where or when I bought it—that is of little consequence to you; but I have owned it for years."

"Then you ought to be able to tell what initials are worked on it and what they stand for."

"Well, I am not quite sure about that," he said, for the first time disconcerted and embarrassed.

"Are you prepared to admit or deny that there are any such characters on it?"

"No, I am not, for the whole subject, to my mind, is too preposterous for a second consideration."

"Well, now, gentlemen," resumed Littlefield, "one word more, and then I have done. This scarf belonged to one of the proprietors of this house. It was given to and worn away by a friend of ours yesterday afternoon. It came back to us last night wrapped about your bleeding hand, and we are bound to know just how it came into your possession. We shall detain you here until the safety of our friends is assured. If they reached their home unmolested all will have an opportunity to rejoice. But if they have been foully dealt with, this 'dirty rag,' in my judgment, will be the strongest evidence of your guilt."

All through the investigation the faces of these men wore an expression of deep hatred and defiance. They treated every question with derision, and allowed no opportunity to escape to ridicule the opinions of their accusers. In this spirit of assumed indifference, they laid back in their bunks, and turning over on their sides, muttered something about being woke up when "Birnam woods shall come to Dunsinane."

One hour after this interview occurred, Tully Littlefield mounted his horse and galloped away to Deer

Creek. He found the Major's dwelling surrounded by a body of men who were engaged in earnest conversation, and in a few minutes was in full possession of the main facts. The Major had been waylaid, dragged from his team, "beaten almost to death," and robbed; and his son, in his efforts to save his father, had been pounded and thrown down an embankment, and little hopes were entertained of their recovery.

A meeting was at once called, at which Littlefield told them of the arrest of the guilty parties and the circumstances which led to their detection. It was decided that the prisoners should be brought back to Deer Creek for trial, and twelve men were appointed a committee to conduct the prisoners hither.

A change came over the prisoners when they were told to prepare themselves for removal to Deer Creek. But a still greater change was witnessed when they were brought out in front of the hotel and formally given into the charge of the committee. Poor fellows! what a contrast! How sad, how pitiful they looked as they climbed into the wagon and took their seats in the centre of the guard. What can move our sympathies quicker than a man overwhelmed with trouble, no matter what his crime. If his life be demanded for the public good, and the demand be sanctioned and enforced by the courts of justice, there comes up, nevertheless, out of the

human heart a compassion which, in spite of us, pleads for mercy. If our sympathies are moved for a criminal who has had a fair and impartial trial in a civilized country, and allowed, after sentence, proper time to meet his death, how much more are our sensibilities quickened when a man falls into the hands of a frenzied mob, and in defiance of law or order is dragged to a place of execution and hurled into eternity without an opportunity to ask God to forgive him. The thirst for blood, the cry for vengeance, the heated passions of men deaf to pity and blind to justice, rushing like a mad torrent sweeping before its furious breath the agonizing cries for mercy, if once seen will never be forgotten.

While the unfortunate men were passing through the mining camps *en route* to Deer Creek, they were met by angry miners who hooted and yelled at them, and at times it seemed as though they would be taken from the wagon and hung upon the nearest tree. As they neared their destination the crowd gathered about the team, and the noise and confusion increased as they approached the Major's cabin. When they had reached their destination the prisoners were taken from the wagon and seated upon the stump of a fallen tree, the twelve guardsmen standing in a half circle about them, and the spectators forming a ring around the little company.

The trial of these two men took place on the Sab-

bath day — a day sacred to the memory of Him who died that all might live. No tone of the church bell was heard, neither was the soothing influence of the house of prayer felt. Their pastor's tenderness and the holy piety — at that moment so much needed — was forgotten in the excitement of the hour. The sun was sinking behind the belts of heavy timber as a man from the crowd stepped forward and said: "Gentlemen, please to nominate your judge." "You'll do, Baxter; you're just the man;" cried out a number of voices, which nomination the meeting indorsed and Thomas Baxter was declared the judge and the noisy gathering the jury. The disposition to shorten the trial and hang their men before dark was common to every one. "Put 'em through, judge," came up over the boisterous crowd from a backwoodsman leaning upon his rifle. "Got the tree already picked out," sang out a savage-looking fellow with a brace of pistols tucked inside his belt. "Jest sling 'em into Murphy's pit," suggested a tall, round-shouldered man, rolling up his sleeves. "Darn yer trials."

At this moment the judge arose and asked the prisoners to stand up; then facing his listeners he said: "Gentlemen, I am the judge in this case, and you are the jury. I propose giving these men a Christian trial." "Hear, hear!" was shouted from various parts of the ring. "When that trial is

ended, and you pronounce them guilty, they will be sentenced to death — not before." This last sentence was greeted with loud shouts of angry displeasure, mingled with threats of violence to the presiding justice.

"Prisoners," said the judge, "have you any friends here?"

"No, sir."

"Have you any acquaintances that you would like to speak with?"

"No, sir."

"Do you see any one here that you would like to have act as your counsel and friend?"

"Well — no, sir. We are deeply grateful to you, but we have no friends."

"Is there any one here who will volunteer his services," again asked the justice.

A painful silence ensued, which lasted for several seconds. At length a man stepped into the ring, and removing his hat, bowed politely to the judge. Every eye was upon him; the prisoners looked at him intently and fixedly. A murmur of dissatisfaction was partially checked by admiring cheers.

"Step this way, sir," said his honor. "What is your name?"

"Frank Graham, sir."

As this name passed from his lips, one of the prisoners sprang to his feet, and ran his fingers

strangely through his hair. He seemed to be greatly agitated, and soon big tears began to follow each other down his cheeks.

“Mr. Graham,” said the judge, “you can converse with the prisoners and render them whatever aid you wish.”

Graham beckoned the weeping prisoner towards him, and speaking in a tone intended for him only, said: “If you value your life, Philip, let no man suspect that we ever met before.” The prisoners and their friend now walked towards the centre of the ring and consulted together for some time. He assured them it was madness to dispute the evidence of their guilt. He believed there were some sympathizers in the crowd who would be satisfied with a less punishment than death. He urged them to make a manly confession, restore to the injured family their money, put themselves into the hands of the people, and ask for mercy. For himself, he promised to do all in his power to save them; but, failing in this, he pledged them eternal secrecy. No one should ever know of their ignominious death. This the prisoners assented to cheerfully, and a message to that effect was sent to the Winchester family. The prisoners now resumed their seats, and Graham addressed the judge and the people. He made a long and earnest plea, covering the whole case. He said: “The prisoners have

confessed their guilt" [uproarious applause from the crowd with cries of "Pass 'em out, judge," "No more chin music!" and so on], "and the trial, which promised to be long and tedious, had terminated to the satisfaction of all. The lives of these two men rest entirely in your hands. Before sentence is pronounced, I desire of your honor but one favor for these unfortunate men. It is that the question of life or death shall be decided by the vote of the people present. If the majority demand that these men shall be hung, let them be given up cheerfully. If, on the contrary, the majority prefer a milder punishment, let them be so punished; but whatever punishment these Christian gentlemen may decide to inflict, I ask your honor that it be postponed until to-morrow morning. On this peaceful Sabbath eve let no man say Nay. Give these poor, friendless men the few remaining hours to prepare themselves for their impending doom. These prisoners have confessed their guilt, and have begged me to soften your hearts and make one earnest appeal for mercy. For himself," he said, "he had come to convict and demand death; but the condition of things were changed for the better, and he was glad for the privilege to hold up both hands for mercy. The parties," he said, "who had the greatest reason to complain had been pronounced out of danger and would recover. The family who had been so afflicted by

these erring men sought not their lives. He was glad to inform them that the prisoners had returned the money, made all the atonement possible, and had received their forgiveness. His heart had been so touched, his sympathies so moved by the utter hopelessness of the prisoners' condition, that he could not regret the step he had taken. He believed he was but carrying out the true spirit of divine law, when he asked all present to be charitable to those who were led into temptation, and show mercy to all that trespass against us. He hoped the people would do nothing which would tarnish the good name of their settlement, but close this holy Sabbath day by extending to these men the mercy accorded by all high-minded courts and conscientious juries."

A great commotion followed the concluding remarks, in which the vilest epithets were used against the prisoners and their friend. At length the meeting was called to order, and, to the disgust of the rabble, the justice ordered that all those in favor of the prisoners being hung should move to the left, and those in favor of flogging should pass to the right. The excitement which prevailed during the division of the crowd, — the taunts and jeers of the left against the right, the exulting applause which came from the left over their excess of numbers, — was one of the most distressing scenes ever witnessed. "The

right," said the judge, when order had been restored, and amid a breathless silence, "has seventy-two and the left eighty-eight, a majority of sixteen in favor of death. The prisoners shall be taken to the Hoffman cabin and confined there under double guard until nine o'clock to-morrow morning; from thence they shall be taken and be hung by the neck until dead. The guard are empowered to carry this sentence into effect." The guard now closed around the prisoners, whom they conducted with great difficulty to the cabin prison, around which both friends and foes remained until a late hour of the night.

The sunbeams had been pressing their long, warm fingers through the belts of heavy timber for some three hours or more, and yet everything was quiet at Rumford's Corner. The smoke from many cabins was seen curling gracefully up into the clear blue sky. A miner with his bucket was seen occasionally wending his way to the creek for water; but beyond this nothing disturbed the sleepy calmness of this beautiful autumn morning, if we may except the drowsy guardsmen stationed at the Hoffman cabin.

I said everything was quiet at the Corner. Yes, so it was; and yet over at the "Forks" men were seen adjusting ropes to the limb of a large pine which stood like a warrior in advance of his corps. The ends of the ropes were let down to within a short

distance of the ground, and swayed to and fro in the light, refreshing breeze.

"Good morning, Mr. Stimpson."

"Ah, good morning, neighbor."

"Fine day for the execution."

"Yes, so it is — good enough for anything."

"Are ye going over to see 'em swing?"

"Well, no, neighbor; I don't relish such spectacles; and between you and me I'm dreadful sorry the boot had n't been on tother leg."

"Them chaps did n't look such hardened criminals to me, neither."

"Well, you are about right, Mr. Stimpson, I voted, of course, with the left, but after a night's reflection I should vote the other way."

"That Graham fellow," continued Mr. Stimpson, "did the smart thing. I do believe if he" —

"Halloo, what's going on down at the prison," broke in his neighbor, drawing his friend gently about by the elbow.

A large crowd was seen gathering about the Hoffman cabin, and shortly after the startling cry was heard that the prisoners had escaped. This piece of news, so wholly unexpected, went through the settlement like wildfire. Knots of men gathered here and there, and the singular and almost miraculous escape became the topic of the day.

A close examination of the cabin followed, when

a hole sufficiently large to admit a man's body was discovered cut through the angle of the chimney near the ground. It had been made *from the outside*, and among the *débris* was found a common sheathe knife with the initials F. G. cut deep into the handle.

•The absence of the Major's canteen and haversack, and the sudden disappearance of everything eatable from Mrs. Winchester's cupboard, was correctly interpreted by the Major and his family, but all knowledge of their whereabouts was faithfully concealed. The knife ultimately got into the hands of the Winchester family, where for years afterwards it could be seen sheathed in a morocco case, and suspended by a silken cord over the mantel-piece. It was not treasured because of its intrinsic value, nor made conspicuous on account of superior workmanship. But it was retained for the great respect which the family bore for its former owner, who had, they asserted, revived true heroism, and demonstrated, at least to the residents of Rumford's Corner, the meaning of the phrase, "A friend in need is a friend indeed."

CHAPTER X.

THE DOWNIE HOUSE, ROUGH AND READY.

"Oh, let me unlade my heart, pour out the fullness of my soul before thee, show every tender, every grateful thought this wondrous goodness moves; but 't is impossible, and utterances, all are vile — since this poor heart can show thee naught, I'll let the future prove my candid obligations."

It was early in November, a chilly, westerly wind blew the crisp leaves high into the air, and after rustling them about in the most spiteful manner, drove them hard and fast into the deep recesses by the wayside. The broken clouds, too, sailed swiftly over the hills and valleys, and the tree-tops bent and shivered in the gale. The heavily laden teams jogged slowly along the ragged roads, the teamster and his animals being half blinded by the clouds of dust which accompanied them. This sharp, blustering wind was but the prelude to a winter of four months' duration — a prelude which admonished the proprietors of the Ripple Spring House to prepare for the change of weather which was nigh at hand.

It was during the afternoon of this disagreeable day that Graham stood under the awning by the watering trough, watching the long lines of wild brants on their way to their warm southern homes.

The gusts of wind ever and anon would strike the exposed face of the hill and lift the dust and leaves so high as to obscure the road at times for some distance, then whirling along the road would disappear only to be succeeded by others. It was just after one of these heavy clouds of dust had passed over the brow of the hill that a boy some fourteen years of age came within sight, and stopping long enough to catch his breath limped down the hill towards the hotel door. He was barefooted, had neither coat nor vest, his pants were suspended by a buckskin thong, and about his neck was loosely tied a red bandanna handkerchief. As he hobbled up to the hotel door his countenance betrayed a hidden sadness, while his general appearance bespoke exposure and hardships.

Nodding humbly to Graham, and thanking him for the glass of water which had been offered him, he leaned against the awning post and fanned his flushed cheeks with an old tattered palm-leaf.

"What is the distance to Sacramento City, sir," began the boy, bashfully.

"About forty miles. Won't you stop and rest a while?"

"No, sir; thank you. I must push on. What is the next station?"

"McQuaid's, Barney McQuaid's on Bear River, about eight miles from here. But sit down, boy;

sit down, and while you rest I'll bring you out a little something to eat."

"What is your name?" resumed Graham, as he put a plate of food into the boy's lap.

"Charlie Downie," replied the boy, with a grateful smile.

"Well, Charlie, what is the trouble? You seem poorly dressed for the season. Are these the only clothes you own? You need n't be afraid to unbosom your troubles to me, if you have any."

The boy sat mute and sad, his eyes fixed on vacancy, while his thoughts seemed to be wandering back over the hills.

"Well, how is it, Charlie? Have you but just got in from the plains?" inquired Graham, sympathetically, still pressing the boy for an answer. "Come, out with it. You will feel better," he continued, as he noticed the boy struggling against his feelings. "You have had a hard time of it, I know. Is n't it about so, Charlie?"

"Yes," he replied, his voice trembling, his lips quivering with emotion; then, pointing down to his swollen feet and bleeding toes, buried his face in his tattered hat and burst into tears.

His story was brief, painful, and tragical. It was told while the tear-drops fell upon his shabby shirt. It came up from a heart glad to be relieved of its painful weight, and was uttered without the slightest hope of relief.

"There was," said he, "one hundred and thirty-two in our train, and we left the Missouri River last June. It is now, I believe, November, and only ninety-four lived to get through. Father was a farmer in Indiana. He sold his place and joined the train at St. Louis. We had a good outfit, and six yoke of oxen. The feed gave out and so did the cattle. We wanted to get along faster, so traded them off for horses. The Indians attacked us on the Sweetwater and wiped out thirty-eight of our party, among whom were father, sister, and a brother next to me. They ran off most of our stock, leaving us but three horses. We could n't get along with our load, so threw away bacon, flour, rice, and grain. We have footed it for the last six hundred miles. Our horses have just given out, and the folks have gone into camp off from the main road about four miles back along. They had but little to eat when I left, and I am on the way to the city for help, as we have some friends there."

No one could doubt the truth of the boy's story. His tender years, his childish purity, so distinctly seen in his brown, sunburnt face, only went to confirm his assertions. The family, it would seem, were among the survivors of the immigrant train which left "St. Joe" on the Missouri River in June, under the leadership of Tom Sedgwick, and was known among the immigrants as the "Corn Crackers."

This train was made up largely of farmers and their families. They met a worse fate, possibly, than the majority of the pioneers who crossed the plains in the early days. They had passed the desert with scanty supplies, haunted by famine and harassed by Indians. They had submitted to every privation, and endured hardships unknown to civilization. They had reached the "land of promise" footsore, discouraged, destitute, and absolutely suffering for food. This was the picture which confronted Graham and his companions at the conclusion of the boy's story. It was a picture which sharpened their wits, and brought to the surface the spiritual inwardness of man.

It was not long before Graham with his mule laden with supplies, and accompanied by the boy, started to relieve the wretched condition of the Downie family.

The boy's statement was substantially correct. Nothing could exceed their poverty or equal their fortitude and long-suffering. The family consisted of Mrs. Downie, her two sons, and two daughters. Fritz, the oldest, had shot a deer and was absent on his trail. Charlie, the youngest, has been already mentioned. Mary and Susan, the daughters, were young women, modest and unassuming. The timely assistance was gratefully acknowledged by all. It was an agreeable surprise. It came so opportune,

and the relief and torture to both mind and body was so much assuaged, that tears, the safety valve to the heart, brought them the much needed alleviation.

The huntsman returned to camp bringing with him his game dressed and ready for use. A general congratulation occurred between the family and their guest, during which the cold formalities usually so embarrassing were forgotten, and a sumptuous supper served, such as the Downie family had not sat down to for many weary months. A conference was now held before an enlarged camp-fire, which lasted for some hours. To develop some plan by which the family could be extricated from their present dilemma, and a bed-rock laid upon which they could build their own fortune, was the paramount question, which was carefully considered. Graham urged them to go back to a small mining settlement known as "Rough and Ready," and settled by a mining company of that name. They had struck good diggings there, and the place would increase in population, and ultimately become a large town. He advised them to open a boarding-house, and the two boys to go to work in the mines. He offered to go with them and to do all he could to accomplish this purpose. This was finally agreed to, and the next day the party halted in the centre of the rude encampment, and called a meeting of the miners about them. These hardy pioneers gave the

family every encouragement to settle and live among them, promising to render such assistance as they should need.

Graham left the family here in the care of men who subsequently not only made good their promises, but continued warm friends of theirs for many years. Before leaving, however, he placed in the hands of Mrs. Downie a small sum of money to cover their immediate wants. He gave them, also, letters of credit upon business houses in the city of Sacramento. Urging them to stick to their adopted home and keep united among themselves, which would assure them success and prosperity, he bade them good-by, wishing them all sorts of good luck, and promising to call and see them at some future day.

Two years after this event a man with long hair and flowing beard, wearing a slouched hat and top-boots, while over his shoulders hung a heavy "poncho," which covered the upper parts of his body, emerged from a deep forest which fringed the ridge of the South Yuba River, and took a seat by the wayside to rest. A short time afterwards a team came rattling along over the dusty road with some half a dozen passengers huddled together in the bottom of the wagon. As the team reached the spot where the traveler sat, the driver stopped his horses and inquired if he would like to ride. The man

instantly arose to his feet and as he walked towards the team stopped suddenly and hesitated ; but on being urged to get in, sprang up over the side and took a seat on the bottom with the rest.

“Are you going to the city, sir?” inquired the driver, as he cracked his whip over his leaders.

“Yes, I am. What are you going to charge to carry me there?”

“Oh, 'bout five dollars, I guess — the stage, you know, charges twelve.”

“Well, the terms, driver, are all right, but are you willing to trust me till I reach the city?”

“Oh — yes — I guess so — why, are you flat broke?”

“No, not exactly that, but I am too poor just now to spare that amount. Now if you don't feel willing to take me through on my word of honor, you may leave me at Nevada, and I will try my luck in the morning.”

“Oh, no ; shan't do that. It ain't my style ; you can ride ; I reckon it's all right. But, by the by, sir, did n't you use to keep the Ripple Spring House.”

“Yes, I did.”

“Well, I thought I'd seen you somewhere afore. But how you've changed — mighty Judas — I should hardly have known you but for yer voice.”

At the conclusion of this little episode the conversation became general. While the party amuse

themselves with their wild, rollicking stories, we will gather into as small a compass as possible the events of these two years, and present them to our readers.

In the summer of 1851 the proprietors of the Ripple Spring House sold their hotel and the company dissolved. The disease which Tully Littlefield had contracted at the head waters of the Yuba River, and which it was believed had been brought under control, broke out afresh and assumed a malignant form. His physicians, therefore, ordered him to spend a season at the Sandwich Islands. Doctor Burns accepted a stewardship on board the steamer Governor Dana, and Graham joined a company of miners *en route* to the southern mines. Two months were wasted by this company in fruitless attempts to satisfy six disaffected minds. Finally the company broke up, and Graham joined a small party on Sutter's Creek in Ione Valley. They were professedly miners, but devoted certain portions of each year to hunting, — game being abundant in this rich and uncultivated region. They spent the fall and winter in various mining operations, and in the spring hung up the pick and shovel and took down the knife and rifle.

Early in the month of March one of the company returned from his customary rounds in search of game, and announced to the party that he had dis-

covered a grizzly bear feeding upon the carcass of a horse about a mile above their camp, and persuaded the boys to attempt his capture. There was a market in those days for live bears, because bull-baiting was among the most attractive amusements of the times. Therefore a steel trap was procured from a party of hunters a few miles above them on the river. It was a large, old-fashioned gin-trap, having attached to it a twenty-foot chain with a hook at the end, the whole weighing perhaps a hundred pounds. This was carried to the spot where the dead horse lay, and carefully concealed close to the animal's back and directly under the tracks made by the bear as he came up from the ravine to feed. The trap was fastened down by long, forked sticks driven deep into the earth, and the chain was passed under the root of a tree and linked, both trap and chain being carefully covered with leaves and withered grass. Next day the trap, to the surprise of all, was gone. The struggles of the bear to free himself from his fastenings were plainly indicated in the condition of the ground and the surrounding brushwood. But he had apparently drawn the long, forked sticks out of the ground as though they were but skewers, and released the linked chain by gnawing a root fully six inches in thickness. His tracks were large, deep, and distinct, and were followed with interest and caution. His route lay along the side

and up the hill, which was not high, but steep. The slope was sparsely wooded but thickly covered with chaparral. It was not long before he was discovered, and his pursuers were gratified to find that he had been caught by one of his fore paws, and that the hook had become buried deeply in the crotch of a scrub-oak. This tree branched off close to the ground, and the bear in his flight had passed through the space between the branches, and thus had helped to bring about his own capture. Half of the chain was wound tightly around the butt of the tree ; and the bear, when first seen, lay exhausted from his efforts to release himself.

The scene about the tree was remarkable for the effects of the animal's fury. He had wound himself up by the chain and again reversed his action, forming a ring to its utmost limits. Young saplings were uprooted and stripped of their foliage, the brush and bramble thicket was flattened to the ground, and the earth was torn up,—all this to such an extent that it seemed impossible for any animal to do so much mischief in so short a time.

The boys sallied out from under the thicket into the open space, and were standing in full view of the bear. All at once he raised himself upon his hind legs, lifting the huge trap with but little effort, and bellowing with maddened fury, sprang toward them. But the chain interfered with his progress,

and he came tumbling head over heels and floundering about in a most comical manner. This diversion caused a panic among the party, who had up to this time shown much bravery, but who now bounded off like deer. The style of retreat, and the peculiar feats performed by them while seeking places of safety, made the event a laughable and memorable one. But, on the whole, the danger was more apparent than real.

The prize so anxiously sought, so successfully captured, was but partly won. He must be secured and moved to a place of safe-keeping before the enterprise could be considered complete. It was not the thousand dollars reward offered by Colonel Hinks that stimulated them, so much as the reputation and prestige they would acquire. It was a big job for five men to undertake, but fewer the number greater would be their renown. So plans were matured and the perilous attempt was made to secure a grizzly bear alive. A Mexican vaquero connected with the ranch was sent for, and a yoke of oxen with a light open wagon borrowed for the occasion. The rear wheels were removed and the wagon bed wedged against the side of the hill and secured. The contest that followed was an exciting one. It began with José's attempts to lasso the bear. At first his horse troubled him: she seemed unwilling to enter the contest, and then, again, the bear would



CAPTURING THE GRIZZLY BEAR.



hug the ground and lessen the vaquero's chances, but at length the favorable opportunity arrived and in a twinkling the fatal noose was lodged about his neck. The struggle which ensued for the next ten minutes was terribly severe. It was his supreme effort, and his last but one to escape his tortures and impending doom. Nothing could be more commendable than the courage displayed by the boys, when, taking advantage of the bear's exhausted condition, they stepped quickly forward and fastened his hind legs to his fore paw. By this achievement they believed the dangers were practically at an end, and the termination of the issue was celebrated by loud huzzas. But such was not the case, as subsequent events proved, for another difficulty arose of still greater importance and which ought to have been more carefully considered.

Conquered, but not subdued, this king of the Sierras lay across the steep slope panting for breath. How should he be got down the hill and into the wagon, was the question. No plan could be suggested but what was fraught with certain danger. It was evident that one of two things must be done, either the trap must be sprung and the foot released, or the tree dug up and the chain uncoiled. The first plan was considered safe and practicable; the latter, although much the safest, would imperil the life of the bear, and could not be thought of. The

moment bruin realized his freedom from the trap he seized the cord between his teeth and snapped it asunder. No one had anticipated such an occurrence. It was so unexpected and so quickly done that for a few moments the whole party were overwhelmed with confusion and terror. Here another laughable scene was enacted in which it seemed as if some of the boys must have flown through the air, for they found themselves shortly afterwards suspended to limbs of trees, ten to fifteen feet above the ground, and could never tell just how they got there.

The party came very near losing their prize, and perhaps would have done so but for the courage of the vaquero and the strength of the lasso. Exhausted as he evidently was, bruised and maimed also, and with his hind legs still inthrallèd, he was, nevertheless, a formidable antagonist. Something must be instantly done to check the advantages he had gained or he would certainly get away in spite of all they could do. He must be gagged. If a piece of wood were inserted in his mouth and fastened, he then could be handled with safety. Preparations were at once made to carry this suggestion into effect.

When he made his final effort for life and liberty, the bear lay on his side on the slope of the hill. The day was far advanced, and the shadows were

creeping down the barren hill-tops. The men were wearied, the horse was jaded, and the bear prostrate and half dead. José, mounted upon his faithful horse, was ready to intercept any attempt at escape. Stimpson and Graham volunteered to gag the bear while the rest held him down. The former took the upper, and the latter kneeled down on the lower side of the bear, and each took an end of the gag and said they were ready.

Well, the plans were good, but they did not work. Nothing had seemed more certain of success, yet it turned out a sad disaster. The bear made his last grand struggle here and died ; but not before he had inflicted wounds upon one of his assailants which disfigured him for life. He made but a single effort and that was a heroic one. Springing from the ground with lightning speed, he plunged down the hill, crushing Graham beneath him in his fall. Everything yielded to his sudden fury and great strength. The lasso had snapped like whip-cord, bringing the horse upon her knees and her rider over her head to the ground. The boys, too, were pitched head over heels, nearly knocking the breath out of their bodies, and for a while the air seemed filled with men and animals. Not one of the party could ever tell just how the last act in the scene began, or how it came to an end. But at its close there lay upon the ground two victims of the con-

test, and the spectators which gathered around them were pale and trembling and silent. The bear was dead ; the gash in his head, and the axe covered with blood, too plainly told the story — that was Stimpson's work. Graham was taken up faint and bleeding, and borne to the neighboring stream. The terrified oxen had broken away and were going pell mell for the ranch.

Graham's injuries were found to be of a serious nature, for in addition to the painful bruises he received, the bear had bitten his arm above the elbow, his tusks passing through it, injuring the bone badly. The country was scoured for miles for the best medical skill that could be employed, but nothing could stop the intermissive bleeding, and he was removed to the State hospital at Sacramento for treatment.

Thus terminated the attempted capture of a grizzly bear alive, — an enterprise so frightful and so rash that in the calmer moments of after years it seemed presumptuous and wicked. It was a spectacle, however, grand and tragical, in which persistent bravery fought against brute force and instinctive self-preservation. It was a scene such as few men were permitted to witness, even in that land so famous for adventures and personal encounters.

The best medical skill could not save Graham's arm ; it was therefore amputated. He lay in the gloomy ward of a hospital month after month, sip-

ping the cup of woe drop by drop. The spring came with its birds and flowers and golden sunshine; the summer passed with its harvest and its attendant joys; the fall came with its seared and yellow leaf, and now we find him in the bed of an open wagon, traveling upon his honor and good name to the city of Sacramento.

He had latterly been employed by a company of miners as a water agent on one of the tributaries of the South Yuba, and the object for which the company was organized having turned out a total failure, he is now returning to the city, feeble and destitute, with a heart crushed by poverty and disappointment. It was a clear, cool night, and the pale moon shone through the leafy branches as the team rattled along over the rugged and dusty road. The company were merry and talkative, and observing the melancholy silence which hung over the new-comer, often spoke in sincerity rough-hewn words of encouragement which were long remembered by him. On gaining the top of Watch Hill Ridge, the glimmering lights of the mountain city were plainly discernible a short distance ahead. The tone and character of each public house was now freely discussed, and the choice being left to the teamster, that worthy replied, "Mother Downie's, of course." The mention of that name brought Graham back to his senses, for his mind had been wandering during the conver-

sation, and the sound of that lady's name fell upon his ears like a clap of thunder. This had never for a moment occurred to him, and surely, of all houses, this was the last one for him to stop at, in his present wretched condition. No, never! He could not stop there. He would never subject his proud heart to such humiliation—for the conversation which followed the expressman's decision only confirmed his suspicions that the once poor and dependent family of Ripple Spring House memory had become one of the first families in the place. No, he could not go there in his present state of mind. They would discover his poverty, mistake his visit, and give his susceptible heart an icy welcome. He could not bring himself to believe that the trifling assistance he gave them when similarly situated had proven the foundation rock upon which they had risen so suddenly to wealth and distinction. And even if it were so, a long time had elapsed since then. They had most likely forgotten the circumstances, which would be nothing strange or unusual.

While he was in this state of mind, they entered the town and drove rapidly up to the hotel door. There seemed to be no way for him to avoid either his companions or entering the house. He concluded, however, it were better for him to engage a room and retire, believing his altered looks and

shabby appearance would permit him to pass unobserved.

A large number of miners and travelers were lounging about the bar-room, which was large and evinced some signs of refinement. There were a few pictures hanging upon the walls and a disposition shown to ornament the ceiling, but the main attraction centred in the bar, which was evidently the pride and glory of the Downie family.

The first face that Graham recognized was that of Fritz, who stood behind the bar nicely dressed, wearing a fashionably cut mustache, a diamond pin, and a heavy gold chain, which reached from pocket to pocket. Graham, stepping up to the desk, said, "Mr. Clerk, if you will give me a room I will retire."

"You came with Marsden, sir, I believe," blandly replied Fritz, scanning the face of the stranger before him.

"Well, yes; I think that is the expressman's name; but what has that to do with me," answered Graham, inquiringly.

"Oh, nothing, sir, especially," replied Fritz; "only Marsden has ordered both your supper and lodgings."

"Indeed!" said Frank, surprised and annoyed. "What am I to understand by that?"

"Only that your bill is settled in advance," re-

torted Fritz, in a sharp, knotty tone, which went through Graham's heart like a stiletto.

But here the supper bell rang, drowning the busy hum, and to avoid further controversy he joined the crowd and took a seat at the table.

"Will you take tea or coffee, sir?" inquired a warm, womanly voice, which came nearly choking a reply; for in that voice he instantly recognized the oldest daughter, Mary, between whom and himself a brief feeling of friendship had sprung up, and to whom he had prophesied their present position.

"Shall I assist you?" kindly suggested a stranger on the opposite side of the table, who had noticed that Frank labored under some difficulty in attempting to cut his meat with one hand.

"Are you lame?" asked another at the same moment.

These questions naturally attracted the attention of every one at the table, and were exceedingly painful to Graham, who sat exerting himself to appear calm, although he was unable to swallow a mouthful.

Mary's curiosity had by this time become aroused, and she changed her position so as to get a better view of the stranger's features. At this moment Graham raised his head, and by the merest accident their eyes met. It was not a timid gaze, neither was it a vulgar stare; but rather one of those pe-

culiar, searching looks which seemed to say, Have we ever met before? But in this case there seemed to be no mistake, for in that single glance the keen eye of woman penetrated both time and nature's disguise, and she beheld, with startled wonder, their friend Frank Graham. She left the sideboard, and hastily quit the room, and as she swung the curtained door aside and stepped down upon the kitchen floor, she was heard to exclaim, "O mother, I believe there is Frank Graham!" A moment later, and in came the old lady, earnestly gazing into every face, her anxiety depicted in every movement, as she cried out "Frank, Frank!" and when her eyes fell upon the prostrate form and heard the stifled sobs of the stranger, she threw her arms about his neck and caressed him with a mother's love.

There was a happy reunion at Mrs. Downie's that night; and the reception Frank received was one of the happiest events of his life. The family offered him many inducements to stay and make Rough and Ready his future home, but he could not accept them.

The next morning, as the time of departure arrived, the family assembled at the street door to bid their friend good-by. The promises were uttered, the farewells exchanged, and the team was upon the point of leaving, when Fritz stepped up, and placing a package in the wagon said, —

“Frank, you will find in this basket some refreshments — a few cigars and a small present from our family. I am mighty sorry you can’t stay with us, and make this your future home. However, if it is good-by — why good-by it is. Here is my hand, and with it goes my heart. Should you ever need assistance at any time, let us know it, and remember that as long as my mother’s name swings upon that sign you can consider this house your home. Come to it as often as you can, — stay in it as long as you please, — we shall be always glad to see you.”

This present consisted of five fifty dollar gold pieces, each being wrapped separately and superscribed with the giver’s name. Inclosed in the wrappers were the sentiments of its donor and the expressed wish that they should meet again.

CHAPTER XI.

THE STATE HOSPITAL.

"Many a weary day went by
While wretched and worn he begged for bread,
Tired of life and longing to lie
Peacefully down with the silent dead.

"Hunger and cold and scorn and pain
Had wasted his form and seared his brain,
Till at last on a bed of frozen ground,
With a pillow of stone, was the outcast found."

LEIGHTON.

THE matter following rightfully precedes the closing scenes of the previous chapter, but as the two incidents narrated there were directly related to each other, it seemed impossible to insert it in its proper place without marring their effect. It has been the author's purpose to connect these narratives and so far as practical arrange them as they occurred, thus allowing the reader to follow the chain of events without interruption.

Those who have followed Graham's career to this point, have become to some extent interested in him. As a disabled man, then, in the seething caldron of human selfishness and greed, his future efforts will be watched with more than ordinary interest.

The State hospital, where Graham parted with his arm, was situated in the city of Sacramento. It was a cheap structure, and was built with a view of accommodating patients afflicted with every variety of disease. It was pleasantly located, and a fine view was had from its southern piazza. At the rear of the building was a spacious yard, which was inclosed by a high board fence. Stretching along under the shadow of this partition were several small, one-story buildings with narrow doors and windows covered with iron bars. This was the insane asylum, and these little buildings were called "lodges." A strong, clumsy picket fence separated this department from the main building, and the slats were rough and unpainted. The space within the inclosure was equally apportioned to each tenement, and within these spaces, from early dawn until the shadows of each declining day reached the centre of the close, these wrecked and stranded intellects aimlessly wandered to and fro. There was nothing connected with this hospital, in which centred so much pain, anguish, and suffering, that could equal the miseries endured by these friendless and abandoned imbeciles. It seemed as if the heart would burst with compassion, and the eyes drown with tears, at the sight of these poor creatures in their filth and rags, going down to untimely graves. The hospital wards, however were kept scrupulously

clean, well ventilated, comfortably furnished, and in charge of men of fair ability and experience. The physicians, who were able and skillful men, enforced the rules, maintained a rigid discipline, and kept the institution up to a fair standard of excellence.

Graham was a patient here for many long, weary months. During the first period of his stay he became annoyed if not frightened at a strange and peculiar noise which appeared to come from the vicinity of the asylum. It was not a continual sound, but was heard at intervals, just at nightfall, lasting sometimes for many minutes. The ward in which Graham lay was on the ground floor, and opened on to a broad portico which gave a full view of the inclosure. The wide, folding doors being thrown open, this singular sound would seem to penetrate every chamber in the building, and fall dismally upon the weak and sensitive ears. It seemed like a human voice, and yet it was so unnatural, so distressing, as to disturb the slumbering patient, and cause him to wish the weird phantom at the bottom of the sea.

"What is that frightful noise," asked Graham, addressing his nurse, the first time it fell upon his ear.

"Oh, that is Goliath stirring up his animals. You did n't know, I suppose," his nurse continued with an air of feigned gravity, "that we had a menagerie out back. But, sir, we have, and when you get con-

valescent, you must go out and look them over ; for there is as fine a collection of wild men as you ever saw. That one," resumed his nurse, raising his hands and eyes in pretentious alarm, as the painful sound again rolled over the yard into the room, "That is the gladiator spoiling for a fight."

"Go on, nurse, please go on ; you interest me," persistently urged Graham, looking up wishfully into his face.

"Well, Goliath is the keeper of the mad-house," began the nurse, "and now and then some of his animals get stubborn and mischievous, you see, and must be flogged. You ought to just see his whip. It's a beauty, and the only thing his keeper can find that will put the 'gladiator' into his bed. He's a tough customer, that 'gladiator,' and is from all accounts as ugly as sin. He's on his muscle to-night again, and Goliath, you see, is whaling the fight out of him. It has always seemed to me rather harsh treatment, but Goliath says the remedy is no worse than the disease. But there," he added, turning his face in the direction of the door and listening for a few moments, "he's down now, and you won't hear anything further from him for some time. We have got used to it here, sir, and don't mind it."

The weeks flew by and the months wore away, and still at irregular intervals the savage encounter took place between Goliath and his infuriated charge.

The wretched madman still gloried in his fancied strength ; he still persisted in his visionary exploits, he still sprang upon his keeper like a tiger upon its prey, and then came the long, furious cry, the deep agonizing wail of pain, the crash and fall which followed his defeat. But these frantic struggles grew less frequent, and the plaintive cries more and more indistinct. The social interest now centred in the medical ward, so engrossing as to dismiss for the time being both Goliath and his unruly patient entirely from Graham's mind.

The medical ward occupied the principal room on the ground floor. It was light, airy, and clean. It contained thirty beds, which were never empty only to "shift for a new patient." Graham had during his stay in this ward witnessed the strange phenomena of three distinct changes of invalids who in turn occupied these beds, and who in the same order passed away. They had been regularly assigned to these beds, and they had lived in them until either cured and discharged or their bodies were removed to the dead-house to be seen no more. Strange characters were admitted to this ward, and inside its cold and cheerless walls were enacted scenes which went far to establish a record for some of the strongest evidences of human suffering, of human fortitude, and human indifference.

It was an interesting spectacle to watch the coun-

tenances of the "incurables" as they scanned the features of each new patient, while he stripped himself and took to his bed. First, he must submit to a random fire of questions which covered the period of his whole existence. Next came inquiries as to the distinguishing symptoms of his disease, the character of which was speedily arrived at, greatly to the prejudice of the physician's diagnosis in all cases. Then, with such satisfaction as he was pleased to admit, he must listen not only to the prognostications as to the length of time he would be permitted to live, but also to a characteristic obituary notice to be published on his decease; likewise to a brilliant eulogistic essay upon his social standing in the world to come, with perhaps an epitaph thrown in, suitable for anybody short of a New York politician.

The medical ward was considered quite generous, for each week it contributed two subjects to the general death roll. No sooner had the night watchman announced the name of the last victim, than the whole ward became interested as to who should be the next "lucky man." The croakers cautiously began to canvass the condition of each patient, and with ominous nods and dubious shakes of the head predict with prophetic zeal the "anointed one."

"Well, Mr. Pickles," began Gimlet, as he threw a bullet of chewed paper at the head of Whalebone on

the opposite side of the ward, striking the headboard of that gentleman's bed with tremendous force, — "well, Mr. Pickles, it is your turn next!"

"What makes you think so?" surlily remarked Mr. Pickles, a defunct alcalde from Hangtown. "I guess I shan't go any quicker for your wishing on 't," he added, bracing himself up on his elbows.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pickles, I had n't the remotest intention of wounding your feelings; but if your face represents your inside as it does your outside, I should again repeat, you are the coming man."

"Thank you, Mr. Gimlet. Hope you will live to see me pass in my chips; but if a man's face is an index, you should have paid your respects to his Satanic Majesty weeks ago.

"Hit him again," yelled out Skeleton from the west end, clapping his hands with great glee, and setting the whole ward in an uproar.

"I'll bet you ten dollars to five, Pickles, I'll outlive you," again put in Gimlet, preparing another bullet.

"Better send that ten dollars to Mrs. Cady on Sixth Street," suggested Pickles, warmly.

"Take his bet," chimed in Ashly, advisedly. "He bled a quart last night, and can't possibly stand another attack."

"I don't want his money half so bad as his washwoman," continued Pickles, visibly affected.

"Let the man die in peace!" shouted Catarrh from the south end, speaking through his nose.

"Take good care of that *nose*, neighbor Catarrh," suggested Mr. Bee, emphasizing "nose" solemnly. "It is highly appreciated," he added, "in this section of the ward."

"Especially the perfume," added Lancet, chuckling under the bed-clothes.

"Does the courtesies of this ward consist in twitting a man of his infirmities?" meekly inquired Mr. Catarrh, snuffling horribly.

"Blow that nose!" bawled out some one from the north end.

"Well, now, gentlemen," began the Rev. Mr. Devine, with his hands joined in an attitude of prayer, — "now, gentlemen, let me, if you please, offer a few extemporaneous remarks, and, if possible, throw a few drops of oil" —

"Amen!" groaned out some one in the most superb style, the characteristic drawl of a Down-East camp-meeting causing considerable merriment, during which the reverend gentleman resumed his reading, and was heard no more.

"Who did that?" angrily shouted Pickles, digging a ball of wet paper from his ear, — "who did that?" he continued, growing pale with rage, and looking savagely around the ward.

"Keep cool, Pickles, keep cool," feelingly put in

Mr. Poultrice, surveying the ghastly face before him. "Don't let these wicked spirits break you down as they did poor Makepeace week before last."

"When it comes down to a question of spirits," hopped in Mr. Peppermint, in a brusque manner, "it behooves you to make your assertions a little less sweeping, for if reports from Bilgewater are reliable, you have handled a sufficient quantity of that fiery monster to account for your being an expense to the State."

During the last part of this sentence Mr. Poultrice, a portly old gentleman, was observed nervously twitching in his cot, and wishfully looking about him for something in the form of a brickbat or even an old boot. A moment later he was seen tumbling out of bed, having lost his balance in his efforts to reach his spitcup. He struck squarely upon his head and shoulders, and then fell over on his back, presenting an extremely ludicrous sight. Here the whole ward burst in one simultaneous roar of laughter. Even Pickles lost his gravity for a moment, and joined the wave of hilarity. But Gimlet and his neighbor Peppermint were entirely overcome, and for a time seemed overwhelmed with the peculiar nature of the show. They laughed and laughed till their sides fairly ached, and congestive symptoms showed themselves in their faces, which had become red and swollen with excitement. Poor

Mr. Poullice was to be pitied. He found it was impossible to get back into bed without assistance, and so kept floundering about on the floor, his face black with rage, and bellowing like a foghorn in a sea of trouble.

The next morning, but too early to distinguish the living from the dead, the usual roll call began among the patients of the medical ward. Peppermint failed to respond, and as the streaks of light grew broader and broader, it was found that his cot was gone. The unusual excitement of the preceding day had brought on a violent fit of coughing which hastened the poor fellow's death.

Thus day after day scenes similar to the one already described came up to relieve or depress the convalescent or the gradually sinking patient. Men living in the midst of suffering and death soon become accustomed to such scenes, and nothing is more common than to hear them jesting during the most solemn moments of their lives. Graham had been no exception to the general rule. His death had often been predicted by the connoisseurs of physical science. But he had survived many of these prophets and their followers. He had seen the beds on either side of him emptied during a single week. He had looked into the face of Death as he came stealthily into the ward in the gloom and darkness of the night ; he had watched him

sink his bony fingers into the vitals of his neighbor and his friend ; he had witnessed the fierce struggle for supremacy and the flight of the victor with his prize. But so far, thank God, he had been spared, and a speedy relief vouchsafed to him. The convalescence permit so anxiously looked for had at length been issued to him, and the irksome sameness of a hospital life at once removed. It was his privilege now to breathe a purer air and view milder scenes. In a short time he should get his discharge, and again resume his *rôle* among the shifting scenes upon the great stage of life.

“Good morning, Goliath.”

“Ah, good morning, Master Graham. Lovely morning, this, for a trip down the river.”

“Yes, the air is pure and balmy — just the day to exercise your animals, as the nurse calls them. Are you going to turn them out to-day ?”

“Oh yes, by and by. Had n’t you better walk over and get a good look at them ?”

“Well, I don’t know about that, Goliath. I fear the impression such a sight might leave upon my mind.”

“Why, are you a philanthropist ? If you are, do come over and get weaned.”

“Well, no ; I am not a philanthropist in the fullest acceptation of the term. Still, I have an abiding compassion for every one that suffers, and especially

for those who are struck intellectually dead; while the body is compelled to perish by slow torture."

"Yes, but these chaps are insensible to pain, and when they become obstinate you can whale them with as much impunity as you would an ugly horse."

"So it would seem. But that privilege does not make it right or less cruel; and no man on earth could persuade me that such theories are correct, much less make me a willing supporter of such barbarous treatment."

"Ah, Graham, you are too sentimental for your own interest. You will outgrow such notions as you ripen in years."

"I hope not."

"Then don't covet such jobs as mine."

"How is your patient, the 'gladiator,' nowadays? He has been pretty quiet of late. Has he recovered?"

"Oh no; such cases seldom get well. It is only a question as to how long they can hold out. The chap you refer to is dead. Died about an hour ago, and I am waiting for his box. Come in and take a look at him."

The "gladiator's" quarters were dingy and small, the walls and ceiling were bruised and slivered, and here and there were painful evidences of desperate struggles between the keeper and his charge. The

room was filthy, and the stench suffocating. The dead man was lying upon his side, with his face to the wall. The body, which was naked and uncovered, was wasted and bruised, and scars and sores multiplied as it became more and more exposed. The mattress on which it lay was in an extremely filthy condition. When Goliath touched the corpse it fell over on its back, and Graham stepped aside and uttered, "O God! how shocking!"

"If I'd known you were going to take on like that, Graham, you should n't have come. What! crying? Well, well, well. That just beats me all hollow. Come, you had better get out of this. I want no babies here."

"Wait, Goliath; wait one moment, please!" gasped Graham, as he kneeled down beside the body and took the cold, rigid hand in his.

"Well, now, that's funny," began Goliath to himself, taking up the disabled hand and examining the scar across its palm, as Graham withdrew in tears. "I think it dreadful funny I never noticed this hand before."

Graham wended his way to the office of the resident physician. Yes, there was a record made, and it was entered on the day that the poor lunatic was assigned to his present quarters. But there was no name and no effects. He had been brought there

by the local authorities, who could give neither name nor anything which could lead to his identity. He had been found, it was said, a wandering cast-away, without shelter or protection, and on account of his demented condition was arrested and consigned to the State hospital. Thus the secret of Philip Rugby's fall and death had been most singularly, and, still more, most providentially, intrusted to his care. There it should remain concealed and forever buried from every human being. His father's gray hairs should never become whiter than they were by the knowledge of the fall of his prodigal son. His mother's heart should never break in hopeless sorrow for her idolized boy. Even Jane, the hope of his life and the companion of his future years, must never know the fate which befell her wild and dissipated brother.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORM AT HARTWELL'S CROSSING.

Blow ye tempest, blow! Unloose your strength and smite the earth with thunderbolts. Lash the sea into fury; lay waste the harvests; bend the sturdy oak, and tear it limb from limb! Uproot the slender pine, and make the forests respect thy power and will! Pour down your rain in torrents, cover the land with floods; drown the beasts of the field; drive the wolf to his lair, and the fox into his hole! Howl, crack, and roll o'er sea and land; sweep, blast, and scourge the home of man.

— THE AUTHOR

ALL was quiet at Hartwell's Crossing. The miners living on the river were waiting with nervous impatience for the storm to cease. It had been severe, and had continued, with but little interruption, for many weeks. In that region of the Sierra Nevadas, at least, the sun had not been seen during all that time, but had been concealed behind the lowering clouds, through which it had vainly endeavored to penetrate. Once or twice the moon peeped through the hazy breach, but it was only for a few moments, just long enough to reveal the fleeting scuds hurrying as it were from danger, and, if possible, beyond the influence of the chilling, blackening storm. The trees and the foliage were dripping with the drizzling rain; the earth was saturated with water; the brooklets, filled with dissolving snows, were rushing furiously down the ravines, the

ravines into the creeks, and the creeks into the angry rivers, and these, swollen to twice their usual size, rolled grandly along, sweeping everything before them.

This protracted storm had covered the Sierra with rains, and loosened its beds of snow. It had filled its water-courses to overflowing, and uniting them into vast floods had covered the valleys with disaster and ruin.

The Mokelumne and its tributaries, like its sister rivers, were entertaining their maternal grandam, the spring freshet, who had come again, as was her custom once a year, to receive their homage, and help them out with their spring clearings. Now the old dame's visits were not always fruitful of good results, nor were they at all times appreciated by her progeny, notwithstanding their loud professions of loyalty and deep devotion. It is true, the younger streams found time to laugh and giggle over what they were pleased to term the old lady's high notions and overflowing propensities; but, nevertheless, it is said the noise and needless bluster she indulged in had in a measure alienated their affections and her whims had become so hateful to the matrons that they not only dreaded her coming, but even celebrated her departure by a grand jubilee.

Upon this particular occasion, however, the old

vixen's outpourings were exceedingly gushing and abundant, and as if to make this visit the most memorable of any which had been known to the gold diggers, she had arranged and carried out a programme somewhat as follows : First, to make a sudden visit and a grand surprise ; then a rapid rise and the scoring of twenty feet above any previous mark known to the " oldest inhabitant ; " take complete possession of all water-courses, cover every bar, inundate all the flats, sweep away all bridges, turn out of house and home every miner within her reach, suspend all branches of industry, and carry terror and consternation into every heart that loitered in her way ; and, lastly, cut off all retreat and supplies, prolong her visit, wear out her welcome, and hold between two rivers a number of miners destitute of food and shelter.

Among the few cabins which had escaped the general destruction was that of the Hudson Mining Company. The members of the company, like their neighbors whose camps had survived the ravages of the flood, had thrown open their doors and given protection to these stricken men until the floods should subside and the rivers become fordable. To the prolonged severity of this storm, therefore, and the necessity which compelled a sojourn within the camp of these generous strangers, are we indebted for the incidents which are given in this and succeeding chapters.

Beautifully situated upon a sloping piece of ground, shaded by a magnificent growth of heavy timber, and commanding, as it did, a fine view of the river, with its varying landscape spread out before it, this charming mountain home at once became a mark of attraction, and in fact it was the leading feature of Hartwell's Crossing. It was a double, story-and-a-half cabin, substantially built, with an air of comfort pervading it, and stood alongside the trail that came up from the Crossing and led to the small settlements back in the mountains. A handsome buck deer, and several carcasses of wild game, including a grizzly bear cub, were being dressed for the larder, and stretched upon various trees, and on the sides of the cabin, were a number of skins placed there to dry.

There was a peculiar coziness about the "Nursery," as the boys were in the habit of calling the general mess-room, which was apparent to every one that stepped within its walls, and its arrangements were so complete that they could scarcely fail to captivate the senses. Indeed, there was such an effusion of "Home, Sweet Home" about the premises that the visitor could hardly weary of its home-like cheerfulness or the warmth and cordiality of its proprietors.

Upon entering the "Crib," as the cook-room was named in contradistinction to the Nursery, the vis-

itor would observe a variety of robes and skins hanging about the walls, together with a number of fancy hunting-frocks, buckskin leggings, and ponchos. On one side, and suspended to wooden pegs, were the rifles and their accompanying powder-flasks, bullet-pouches, and hunting knives, which were bright and clean, denoting their continued readiness for any emergency. Over the fire-place, which was broad and deep, and arranged with singularly good taste, was displayed a peculiar assortment of trophies gathered by their owners at various times and places, and bearing labels which gave the dates of their capture and such information as to their origin as could be obtained. There, for instance, were the Indian's bow and quiver of arrows captured from such a tribe ; pipes and tomahawks found upon the bodies of the chiefs left dead upon the plains, on the retreat from an unsuccessful raid. There were the Mexican saddles with their splendid trappings, bridles and mammoth spurs, with jingling bells, the broad sombrero, bright scarlet sashes, the lariats coiled up like serpents ready to spring, and their deadly nooses hanging passively upon the pegs in the walls. Then, upon a shelf, by themselves, were a fine collection of gold, quartz, silver, and iron ores. Beyond these trinkets and odd souvenirs, and piled up to the rafters, was to be seen something of far more interest to the practical eye, and, in the present condition

of things, of superior importance to every one water-bound by this vast deluge, namely, an ample stock of supplies. It would have made a man hungry to see the great sacks of flour that were piled up in one corner — and quieted any apprehensions of famine to behold the sides of bacon, hams, jerked meats, bags of dried fruits, pockets of Java coffee, jars of pickles, cans of preserves, and boxes of sardines, that were distributed upon the shelvings on either side of the cabin. Then, again, the visitor could not have failed to notice in the “cook’s corner” bags of sugar, rice, beans, firkins of salt pork, butter, and lard, and lastly, but none the less deserving of especial mention, were the three iron-bound kegs which were carefully horsed upon a rack between the chimney corner and the window. One contained vinegar; the other held sugar-house syrup from New Orleans, heavy bodied, rich, and of excellent flavor; the last one was filled with — well, it’s of no particular consequence what it contained.

“You are not,” began the loquacious Colonel, addressing the visitors (the Colonel was at that time an aspirant for political honors, and anxious to create a good impression upon every occasion), — “you are not,” he again resumed with becoming dignity, “more thankful, my friends, for a miner’s welcome, than we are for the cause which has compelled you to become our guests. To the wandering habits of

man, therefore, and his free interchange of views — brought about in many instances by accident rather than by design, and perhaps not greatly dissimilar to the one which has brought us together to-night — has the world long been indebted for its wonderful progress, and its inhabitants for the singular discoveries of hidden treasures so long hoarded for the uses of man.”

“Hi, yah,” yelled Hughes, spitting over his shoulder.

“I beg your pardon,” said the Colonel, choking off that unruly member and waving his hand authoritatively, “I am addressing the company’s guests, and not you. Let us hope, my friends,” he resumed, “there may spring from this fortuitous meeting a friendship which shall increase with years, and perish only when freshets are unknown and water ceases to run. Supper is now ready ; please be seated.”

There was a slight disposition on the part of Hughes and Billings to congratulate the Colonel for this sublime outburst of eloquence, but the recipient of these intended favors kindly suppressed them in the bud, and closed the effusions of praise by exclaiming : “Pass up your plates, gentlemen, and be served. We have for this evening’s meal, venison steak broiled over a bed of live coals ; cub bear steak spit toasted before a quick, sharp fire ; grouse

fricasseed and served in butter gravy ; rabbit pot pie, with Yale crust, — what can I serve you to ? Gentlemen will please pass the side dishes and serve our guests with such delicacies as their appetites may crave.”

There, reader, did you ever sit down to such a meal as that ? Look at that pyramid of steaming hot biscuit. Did you ever see snow-flakes, fresh from the clouds, that could surpass them in whiteness ? Do look at those slapjacks ; what a sight. Why they are as big as a dinner plate, and brown as a creole's foot. This is where the sugar-house syrup makes a point.

“ Yes, coffee, if you please — thank you.”

Talk about Belshazzar's feast and the delicacies of Delmonicos : why, they are no more to be compared to this bill of fare than a pippin to Mount Shasta.

“ Stewed peaches ? No, thanks — not any. Preserves ? Oh, no — never eat them. Pie, did you say ? Well, yes — small piece. Thank you, nothing more. Don't urge — please don't.”

“ Now, gents.” The Colonel got up, senatorial fashion, and with a face beaming with smiles and gestures equal to the occasion, said, blandiloquently : “ Now, gents, if you have finished your suppers, let us, before leaving the table, decide upon some sort of a programme for the evening's entertainment. What shall it be, — cards, checkers, or dominoes ?

In making up your games, don't forget your guests, boys. Please to nominate."

"That's right, Colonel; you just suits me, you do — that's business," said Perkins, from Willow Bar, with an approving smile, and bowing with mock gravity to the "chair."

"If it is in order, Mr. Speaker," began Hughes, methodically, and addressing that acknowledged functionary with parliamentary precision, and taking his cue from Perkins's bombastic allusions to a presiding officer. "If it be in order," he again sang out, having been jerked down into his seat with more force than elegance by his colleague, "I should much prefer to hear a good old-fashioned story — or a song, for that matter."

"Hear, hear!"

"I shall vote that ticket every time, Mr. Moderator," put in Billings from Dry Creek, as he rose majestically, and stove the heel of his boot through the top of a nail keg, and calmly proceeded to fill his pipe. "I deeply regret, sir, having disfigured this piece of furniture," he resumed, apologetically, "but allow me to say, that if the gentleman's suggestion becomes the law, I shall call upon some one present to furnish us with "A boat, a boat to cross the ferry."

"Everything now indicates, Mr. President, that we are on the eve of another great flood," suggest-

ively remarked McClellan of Fiddle Town, reverentially acknowledging the chair. "In which case the ferry would about encompass the earth. Let me hope, sir, that the boat will be equal to the occasion, and that the second Mount Ararat shall be founded at Hartwell's Crossing."

"Well done, Mac. Good for you, boy!"

"Mr. Chairman, we are digressing from the main question," began Whittemore from Gregg's Cañon, with a stiff, congressional air. "The gentleman's sorry attempts at witticism, dull and insipid as they are, would no doubt upon some other occasion prove highly acceptable to all, but in view of the question before the house, you will agree with me, that we are drifting away, gentlemen, drifting away from our friend's motion; therefore I move the previous question."

"The gentleman — I beg pardon — one moment, please. The gentleman has found time, while occupying the place of his betters, to cast reflections" — ("Order! order!") — "just a moment, please, — just a moment," — persisted Hamilton from Stony Bar, striking the table furiously with his plug of tobacco, — "he has pleased to insinuate" — ("Order! order!") — and the gentleman resumed his seat violently agitated.

"Let us put the question in form, Mr. Speaker, as they do at town meeting, and then vote upon it,"

hopped in Mathews, bringing his palms together with a whack that sounded like the bursting of a bladder.

"Mr. Moderator," began Tibbetts.

"Question, question!"

"If it be your minds, gentlemen," said the chair, amid a babel of tongues, "to adopt the following resolution, you will please manifest it in the usual way: 'Resolved, that this meeting do now adjourn to the crib and devote this entire night to story, song, and mirth.' Are you ready, gentlemen?"

"All ready!"

"What say you?"

"Aye!"

"It is unanimous. But, good heavens, why do you make such a racket? Is there a roof left above our heads?"

Every man instinctively looked up, and withdrew with eyes filled with frolic and faces beaming with smiles.

There is an indescribable charm in the brightness of a cheerful fire, and it is never more enjoyable, perhaps, than when seen in an open grate. You are apt to appreciate it upon a cold winter's night, and more especially when listening to a pitiless storm as the wind is howling above your house and the snow comes drifting against the window pane. It puts you in a happy frame of mind and fills you

with social comforts. Besides, it seems to warm you all over, as it were, with a sort of self-satisfying quietude, which, while it aids you in modifying the discomforts of your own life, lessens assuredly your sense of the evil too often seen in the lives of others. If the ordinary coal fire can produce such grateful influences in a quiet New England home, what must have been the effect of the mammoth fires which were the joy and the pride of the cabin life that accompanied the pathfinders in their march to civilization? What must have been the effect, think you, upon the minds of the assembled guests as they gathered around that great roaring wood fire at Hartwell's Crossing? Why, it was simply electrical, and every man there that night, as he sat filling his pipe before its bright and cheerful glow, felt as happy as though the mail had arrived, bringing him glad tidings of great joy from hearts yearning for him in his dear old cottage home.

"Graham, it seems to be the general wish," began the Colonel, as he took down his pipe from the mantel-piece and settled back against the wall for a comfortable smoke, "that you favor this company with a story."

"I am sorry, boys, you should have chosen one so illy prepared; but if reminiscences can be made available, I have no objection to telling you of a narrow escape I met with at the Eagle Roost on the Yuba River."

"All right," said the Colonel, "let us have the incident, I feel quite sure it will be appreciated."

"Hold on a moment, Graham," said Tibbetts, "while we fix the fire a little," and several armfuls of wood were added, if that were necessary to increase the magnificent blaze which went roaring up the chimney.

"Now, boys," began Graham.

"Just a moment longer, please," said Hamilton, "while we arrange the seats. Nothing is more annoying to a story-teller than to be disturbed in the midst of his story."

CHAPTER XIII.

MAMMON, GOD OF MONEY.

'T was eight bells when our mate Malloy
Gruffly cried, "Starboard watch ahoy!"
That from a sleep so sound I woke.

There never was a wish concealed
Beneath a joy that seemed so real,
There never was a hope more vain
Concealed beneath a lust for fame,
There never was a joy more brief,
There never was such poignant grief,
As came to me in that strange dream.

THE AUTHOR.

"I WAS all alone at the Eagle Roost," began Graham, as soon¹ as the boys were ready, "waiting for my friends to return from an expedition to the headwaters of the Yuba, and during this interval I was working on a river claim, trying to earn enough to replenish the supplies in case the boys should return flat broke. As was my custom after supper, I strolled down to the river and took a seat on a smooth rock at the water's edge, that overlooked a deep eddy which swung round under the bank some twenty feet below where I sat. There I remained for some time absorbed in my own thoughts. I had become deeply anxious about the safety of the expe-

dition and the return of my friends. The season was growing late ; I was suffering from the extreme loneliness of my situation ; and my mind had become feverish from the uncertainty attending their unaccountable delay in returning home. Thus I sat watching the trail that led down from the ridge and terminated at the flats beneath Eagle Mountain. I was watching this trail for the first glimpse of the returning party, which would relieve my anxiety and solve the mystery of their prolonged absence. In fact, I had become lost in a deep and painful reverie, in which my own reverses seemed the most prominent. The privations and sufferings which I had endured, the bitter disappointments, and my present impoverished condition, had passed in review. I was recalling certain of my acquaintances who had made their pile and gone to their homes to receive the smiles and congratulations of their friends. I was just thinking of my mortgaged home and the aching hearts beneath its roof, — so helpless, so poor in purse, and yet so rich in affection, — and discussing in my mind what would become of them if I did not soon return and redeem the one and comfort the other, when at that moment a boat shot out from behind a ledge of rocks and glided swiftly down towards me.

“It was an old-fashioned dug-out, and its occupant an old man dressed in the garb of a miner, and

unarmed. His hair and beard were white as snow and fell in heavy masses down to his waist. He paddled his canoe dexterously up to the bank below where I sat, and rising to his feet looked up into my face and said, 'Halloo!' I answered 'Hilloo!' and scanned him closely from head to foot, — for I was surprised to see this man, supposing there was not a human being foolish enough to settle above the Eagle Roost on the South Yuba. I never saw a nobler specimen of physical man before. I never saw a more venerable countenance, or eyes that expressed such tenderness or held such magnetic power. In fact, he was grand and princely, and beautiful to look upon.

" 'What, he said, 'are ye all alone down here?'

" 'Yes,' I replied ; 'all alone.'

" 'Well, what are ye doing?'

" 'Working a river claim.'

" 'How does it pan out?'

" 'Not worth a cent.' And I then added : 'How are you doing up your way?'

" 'Well, I have done doing, young man.'

" 'How so? Have you made your pile?'

" 'Oh, yes ; I have got all the gold I want.'

" 'Perhaps you would like to sell an interest in your claim.'

" 'Well, I don't know but that I would.'

" 'What are your terms, sir?'

“ ‘ Well, there are no terms, my boy ; only share my camp, sign articles of copartnership, take all the gold you can find use for, and go home and enjoy all the happiness that gold can purchase.’ ”

“ ‘ And you — what is to become of you ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Well, that’s of little consequence. But if you wish it, I’ll go home with you. We’ll add our wealth together, making one mammoth fortune, monopolize the avenues of trade, get up a corner in gold, and control the destinies of kingdoms and empires.’ ”

“ ‘ Can I depend upon what you say,’ I said, dazzled with the stupendous offer.

“ ‘ Yes, you can.’ ”

“ ‘ I will take you at your word.’ ”

“ ‘ All right ; jump in.’ ”

“ And I did ; and the boat darted out into the stream. The sun had long since disappeared behind the western hills, and the moon, following in its wake, had risen above the highest peaks in the Sierra Nevadas. The solitude was grand and beautiful, the moon’s silvery beams penetrated the vapory veil which hung over the yawning cañons and lighted up their wild and ghostly scenes. On sped the boat. Not a word had been spoken by either. Never had my heart felt such rapture before ; never before had such a transition from black despondency to the highest pinnacle of bliss been mine to enjoy ;

and as I looked into his warm, friendly face, I felt the utmost faith in the purity of his visit and the most tender affections ripening in his favor.

"I began to feel that perhaps I was entering upon a more propitious season of life ; that maybe my unfortunate days had culminated, and that the evil spirit which had so long held me in bondage had been superseded by one less vindictive if not wholly impartial. How beautiful and pure were my longings, how sweet and hopeful my dreams. How many were the air castles I built, and how grand the schemes I conceived, as the boat skimmed over the stream. What a dazzling future was before me ; how fabulous the wealth that was mine ; how exalting my aims ; how delightful the delusions of the hour. What would I not do for those who had loved me in poverty. Ah, what would I not do to those who had crushed me in weakness and stifled my appeals with scorn !

"At last we rounded the ledge of rocks from whence I had first seen the boat proceed, and, passing through a vapory cloud, entered the mouth of a cave of inky blackness, and I saw no more.

"Up to this moment I had not suspected the object of this man's visit, nor doubted the goodness of his intentions. No, not a shadow of suspicion had crossed my mind, but, on the contrary, I had regarded myself as one of the most fortunate of men,

and my companion the grandest type of the good Samaritan. Yet the blackness of this cave, the unearthly noises which seemed to menace me upon every side, together with the dead, chilly atmosphere and the singular silence of my partner, had aroused a dreadful fear, which so wrought upon my sensibilities that it awakened the most painful apprehensions for my safety. In fact, I had become so terrified at my situation that it seemed as though I should die from fright and nervous prostration.

“My suspicions soon assumed a more definite form, and I saw but too plainly the plot that had been set on foot to decoy me away, and realized for the first time the magnitude of the imposition practiced upon me. Yes, the deception was perfect, the capture complete, and I was doomed, aye, doomed to some tragic death.

“You see, boys, I had been dissatisfied with my humble estate, and continually murmuring at the simplicity of my calling. I had fallen a prey to my lust for gold. I had been blinded by avarice and decoyed into the realms of some monster of evil.

“I have never been able to estimate the time we were in this subterranean passage nor the distance we made to reach the golden cavern in the bowels of the Sierra Nevada ; but just before I was taken in charge by the attendants, who, it appeared, had already arrived at the lodge in anticipation of my

arrival, a powerful light burst upon me, relieving at once the terrible gloom, and I opened my eyes to behold a most wonderful scene. As the boat skimmed along over the sparkling waters and shot through the complex caverns, I discovered a number of great vaults which were full of immense treasures. Everything I saw was literally full of gold and silver and precious stones. The arches, the pillars, the walls, aye, even the waters, sparkled and danced with gold and jewels. In fact, the brilliancy of the scene was overwhelming, and I was only too glad of a change.

“The moment the boat touched the steps, which were of solid gold, my conductors smote the wall before which we stood with their golden staffs, and at the same instant exclaimed : ‘All hail, monarch of the Sierra Nevadas, all hail!’ The partition moved instantly to one side and we passed in, — that is, myself and guides, — for to my surprise I found that my partner had disappeared. The scene which now opened itself to my wondering gaze beggars description, and I stood transfixed with joy and amazement. Why, boys, it was a veritable grotto, so rich, so gorgeous, that I almost lost my breath as I beheld it. It seemed to me it must have been cut out of a solid mountain of gold, for the walls were of gold, the ceiling was of gold, intermixed with gems which sparkled with great brilliancy and

beauty. The floor was of gold and silver interlaid in mosaic form, and piled upon it in different places were great heaps of gold dust. Some of these heaps were of fine river gold, others of a coarser nature, the grains varying from an ounce to a hundred pounds in weight. The columns which supported the dome were of solid gold, and the magnitude of this vast vault of treasures was so enormous that my mind failed to comprehend its stupendous vastness. The chandeliers, of the most exquisite designs and of marvelous workmanship, were of gold, as were the chains by which they were suspended. The tables, the chairs, the sofas, divans, and other articles of furniture were also of gold. The walls were variously adorned by ornaments and emblems of diamonds, pearls, and other rare gems. The vases were filled with flowers of rare beauty, which impregnated the air with their perfumes, and these, as also the frames which held the works of the greatest artists known to civilization, were of gold and decorated with diamonds and rubies. In the centre of this temple of wealth and splendor stood an altar. In form and appearance it resembled an immense boulder. It was twenty feet high, and as many in circumference: its weight and value could only be estimated. It was of solid gold, weighing several tons, and worth as many millions of dollars. Upon the top of this golden altar, and arrayed in all

the magnificence that wealth could procure, stood Mammon, the god of money. In one hand he held a golden scroll, and in the other a pen richly ornamented. His garments were of pure white silk decorated with the most beautiful and costly jewels. A crimson sash, spangled with pearls, was wound about his waist. He wore upon his head a crown of great beauty, and from its apex sparkled a diamond of immense size and of dazzling brilliancy.

“In this abode of elegance, in the centre of this extravagant splendor, surrounded by treasures too colossal for computation, stood — who? — why, my partner — the King of the Sierras. There he stood, a strange and seductive power, beautiful in person, dignified in figure, and dazzling to look upon. Indeed, as I gazed into his deep-set eyes, and saw the fatherly tenderness in the fullness of his face, as I stood in the sunshine of his smiles, and felt the warmth of his compassion fall upon me, I became disarmed; my fears vanished, my suspicions fled as a breath of air, and I again surrendered to his beguiling snares. My attendants now led me to the altar and placed me upon a large and richly ornamented rug, and bowing with deep reverence to his majesty, and kissing in humble submission the rock of gold, withdrew and we were alone. Sweet and fairy-like music now filled the temple, which lifted me up, as it were, and I became enchanted and

dazed by the brilliancy of my surroundings. When the chant had subsided, there came from various parts of the grotto, exclamations of this nature :—

“ ‘All hail, Mammon, god of money ; all hail !’
‘ We worship thee, O King and Prince of wealth, all hail !’ ‘Great sovereign, monarch of the Sierra Nevadas, all hail !’ ‘Before thee, Great Ruler, all nations bow, to thee, all hail !’ ‘Unto thee, O Gold, all powerful Prince, cometh the people, and casting themselves down before thee, clap their hands with joy, and cry, Lift thy servants up, enrich us, O Mammon, that we may glorify thy name forever !’

“Now my partner waved his hand and the temple was wrapped in silence.

“ ‘You recognize me, do you ?’ he asked.

“ ‘Yes, you are my partner,’ I replied.

“ ‘That is to be,’ he said, smiling, and then added :
‘This is my claim. I have not deceived you.’

“ ‘It is wonderful,’ I said, gravely ; ‘most wonderful.’

“ ‘When you asked me what were my terms,’ he continued, ‘to become an equal partner in this claim, I told you they were to share my camp, sign articles of copartnership, draw out all the moneys you could use, and be happy. Are you ready for business ?’

“ ‘I am,’ I replied, dazzled by the scene about me.

“ ‘ This,’ he resumed, ‘ is but the anteroom to my palaces and domains ; and the wealth you see here is but a drop in the bucket compared to that which you are yet to see. This chamber will no more compare with what is yet to come, than the darkness through which you passed on your way hither can compare with the brightness of the noonday sun. Sign this compact, bow down and kiss this golden rock ; and prepare yourself to behold the grandeur of my domains, and enjoy the splendors of my throne.’

“ ‘ Read the compact !’ I said, excitedly.

“ Unfolding the beautifully figured scroll, my partner read as follows : —

“ God of heaven, and earth, and sea ; Thou who giveth man and taketh him away ; Thou who separateth the wheat from the chaff, immortalizing the one and casting out the other, O hear me. For be it known unto Thee, great Jehovah, that this day hath appeared unto me, the signer of this compact, who voluntarily and of his own free will alienates himself from Thee and Thy throne forever : And further be it known, that it is his purpose and desire to transfer his allegiance unto me, his future sovereign, king, and master. In my presence, therefore, and in Thy sight, he doth solemnly affirm and take oath, that from this day, henceforth, he denieth Thee and Him who died upon Calvary ; that he renounces all

relationship, both worldly and spiritually, and now seeks in my dominions that which hath been denied unto him in Thine, namely, Gold. Henceforth and for eternity he knows no other god before me. And in token whereof he hath bowed down before me and sealed this copartnership, by first kissing this rock of gold, and signing the compact.'

"I listened to the reading of this covenant with death, with sickening fear, and shocked with horror. The terms were but too plain; their significance could not be misunderstood. If they meant anything, they meant just this: a life of pleasure, luxury, and ease; a few brief years of purchased triumphs, and then what? An unconditional surrender of both body and soul; a life of pomp and glory, and then — death and eternal damnation. The sacrifice, it seemed to me, was too great, too appalling. I could never yield to such conditions. But could I consent to return again to poverty and the sickening details of an impoverished life? Could I, with these golden opportunities within my very reach, stoop again to humiliation and want? Go back and humbly eke out a miserable existence? No, never! Then, again, with this boundless wealth at my command I could go home, remove the mortgage from our cottage home, adorn and beautify it still more, if that were yet possible, and place my mother in affluent circumstances, and make her de-

clining years the brightest of her whole life. And, again, I could satisfy the great yearnings of my heart, and remove forever the canker which was eating out my life and destroying my peace of mind. I would marry Jane — Excuse me, boys — I forgot myself. I get a little weak, you see, as I near the threshold of my old home. Forget, please, that I mentioned her name. But there, it is all right. Perhaps you have been there, too. However, as I was saying, I would marry Jane — the purest little gem of a girl, boys, you ever laid eyes on. Yes, I would marry Jane.”

“That ’s what you said,” put in Baxter; “that ’s just what you said,” he repeated, a little annoyed at the useless repetition.

“Do let the boy go on !” rang out several voices.

“Go on, Graham, go on,” said the Colonel, warmly.

“Well, boys, as I was saying, — now don’t interrupt me, please, — I would marry Jane” —

“Confound that girl, grunted Tibbetts, somewhat irritated.

“Oh, do let the man alone. Please let him tell the story,” put in Billings, savagely.

“Go on, Graham ; do please go on,” said the Colonel, persuasively.

“I would,” resumed the narrator, “build a magnificent castle upon Rugby Farm, and live and love the balance of my days. Yes, with this vast fortune

I could do a deal of good, and perhaps, at the end of a well-spent life, redeem my mortgaged soul by bequeathing my colossal fortune to some charitable institutions. Yes, gold I must have — gold I would have — gold at any sacrifice — I would have gold.

“ ‘ Partner,’ I said, ‘ I am ready. If I am to sign the bond, it were better it were done quickly,’ and I fell upon my knees before the altar, — there, with the pen in one hand, and the golden compact in the other, I leaned forward to press my lips upon the block of gold.

“ But I failed to do it, boys. I did n’t kiss Mammon that night. Neither did I sign the compact. For just as I was about to commit that nefarious wrong, there shot up before my gaze a picture of my mother’s face, and I fell back overwhelmed with fright and astonishment. The profile was perfect, the expression of anguish deep and uncontrollable; the eyes, though partly closed, were full of tears. She held an open Bible, in such a manner that I could not fail to comprehend the purpose of her visit or the significance of the passage to which her finger pointed. The vision came and went, as a flash of light, and I saw it no more ; but in that instant I saw her head bowed in humility and prayer, her beautiful face bathed in tears, her heart bursting with grief, and her finger resting upon that awful passage : ‘ For what shall it profit a man if he shall

gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' I see that sweet image to-night, boys — just as clear and defined as I did two years ago, when it saved me from bartering away both body and soul for gold."

"Come, Graham, don't stop; do, pray, go on."

"Well, there's but little more to tell," remarked the story-teller, as he reached for a fire-brand to light his pipe. "As soon as I had recovered from the effects of the vision I saw, I sprang to my feet, renounced my allegiance, and denounced the compact. I declared it my purpose to retire from this accursed influence and return again to the Roost. I openly refused a compromise with death and oblivion, preferring the most abject poverty with a hopeful life and a calm and beautiful future guaranteed. This sudden and unexpected change of front so enraged the god of money that he declared I should suffer, as I deserved, an ignominious death. He rang the bell which formed the canopy above his head, and men, like Roman gladiators, in tunics of gold, and armed with golden battle-axes, came from every direction, and instantly closed in around me.

"'Take this snivelling penitent!' said the angered king, 'and mount ye upon the highest cliff of our domains, and without mercy, or a moment's time for prayer, hurl him headlong into the yawning abyss below! Away with him! Let me see his face no more! Begone!'

“Well, boys, I thought we should never reach the place of execution. It was up, up, up, through winding slopes, over broken and ragged ledges, over furious streams, and by roaring cataracts. But at length we arrived upon the verge of a deep and blackened precipice, and preparations were at once made for carrying the sentence into effect. They gathered me up in their arms, and bore me along to the farthest point that it was possible for them to reach in safety, and told me to close my eyes and pray. The waning moon was faintly seen, hiding its face in the lofty peaks of the Sierra Nevadas, its lingering beams resting upon their hoary heads dimly seen against the blackening sky. The silence was awful, and my approaching doom too horrible to dwell upon. The supreme moment arrived, and in the few seconds that were spared to me, the whole of my life passed swiftly in review. It was one of which I had no reason to be ashamed. It was one that assured me of a peaceful future and calm repose, and I awaited the end with fortitude and hopeful resignation.

“We had now reached the outer edge of this frightful hell, and my executioners, having braced themselves firmly for the purpose, swung my body to and fro. When the desired momentum was gained, they counted in solemn measure, one, two, three, and tossed me headlong over the precipice, and to my

death. The descent was so rapid, the fall so prolonged, that my reason and sense of terror seemed to have left me, with the exception of sufficient life and consciousness to realize that I was plunging down, down, down, headlong to destruction. But, singular as it may seem, the moment my body struck the water, that instant my reason returned, and I rose to the surface struggling for life. I floated with the current for a few seconds, and fortunately caught the overhanging branch of a willow-tree, and swinging myself in shore, made one grand and supreme effort for life. Boys, I was saved." And again the narrator caught a fire-brand and applied it to the bowl of his pipe.

A silence of some moments ensued, and during the puff, puff, puff, which escaped from the smoker's lips, the little clouds of smoke rolled away in the chimney corner.

"Well, how is it?" said Hughes, inquiringly. "I kind o' like the story; but the conclusion is about as clear as mud — at least, it is so to me!"

Another silence, during which every man looked into the narrator's face for an explanation.

Puff, puff, puff, and then the narrator said, with a benignant smile, "Why, boys, it was only a dream."

"Julius Cæsar!" broke out Mathews; "I suspected as much!"

"Fell asleep, eh!" said Byfield.

“Yes,” said the Colonel, drawing a long breath ;
“rolled over the bank into the river, — that ’s a good
un, boys ; that ’s a good un. Let ’s take some-
thing ” — and they did.

CHAPTER XIV.

DEADMAN'S BAR.

“The raven croaks
By day, the owl by night,—such affinities are
The present tenants of Deadman's Bar.”

“GRAHAM,” said the Colonel, “the courtesies of this camp permits the story-teller to choose his successor. Please to nominate.”

“Robert Baxter,” he answered.

“Gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you, Robert Baxter of Mokelumne Hill, one of the earliest pioneers to the northern mines, and among the first settlers on the North Fork of the American River.”

Baxter responded as follows :—

Boys, —

Did you ever hear of Andy McQuaid,
The Sidney cove that fled from the judge's
Stand, and jumped into the cañon at
Deadman's Bar, and was drowned ?

No ? never heard of him ? Well now, that's funny ;
But there, I'll tell ye the story. For he was
Quite a chap in his day, and then his name
Deserves a place upon the calendar of fame.

We dammed the river, ye see, at Deadman's Bar,
And Andy was our president. His face was
Exquisitely fashioned for the part he assumed, —
That of a minister of the Orthodox persuasion.
His keen gray eye sparkled in our evening
Councils, and his oily tongue frequently
Calmed the troubled waters. And then, again,
He was fearfully sweet when he said Amen.

Twelve hundred ounces were taken from our
Claim one day. And that night we sat in the
President's tent, feasting our eyes upon its glittering
Scales, filling as it did a twelve-quart pan,
For when the morrow dawned the dividend
So declared would amply repay each man
For his week's exposure and cold ; —
But there, what won't a man do for gold.

The night wore heavily by, as such nights often
Do when the mind's disturbed by delusive
Dreams. Just as the sentry, upon his lonely round
Steals a nap, and sees his home again,
So in my troubled sleep I saw the pan of
Gold increase in size, and rise to such
Proportions that my poor heated brain
Fairly reveled in luxury and fame.

Ah, what's that? Surely it was not the wind,
And the wolf never trod thus heavily! Why it
Was a human foot feeling its way through the camp.

Yes, there was the figure bent down with weight,
Sneaking through the trees, even surpassing the wolf
In his flight, as he stole away in the night.
Boys, if ever a man in a vision was seen,
I saw McQuaid that night in my dream.

The morning came, but the gold was gone,
And vengeance stared each man in the face ;
Stolen, it was said, in the night. And Father
McQuaid, more dead than alive, paced the camp
And solemnly cried : " Boys, lay up your treasures
In heaven, where moth nor rust can corrupt,
Nor thieves break through and steal ! " And then
Went down upon his knees and prayed again.

Thus the day wore on, and in twos and threes the
Men sat, with blackened brows, along the river bank
In the cool evening breeze. And dark suspicion
Like a pall of death hung over all.

" Tom," said I to my trusted friend, as we stood beneath
The willows on the bar, " I saw in my dream last night
A thief bearing our gold away. Watch my hand
As it carves his name in this bed of sand."

" What ! " said he, struck dumb with surprise ; " is it
Father

McQuaid ? that venerable man, whose guilt I see
Traced here in the sand ? 'T is hard, Bob, to believe
Our boys could become so grossly deceived."

" Let 's prove it to-night, Tom. We 'll both stand guard

And watch this hypocrite from now till dawn,
And possibly prove, though we get no reward,
That the ways of transgressors are fearfully hard."

The night was dark but clear, as Tom and myself
Followed the president through brambles and briers,
Over ledges and rocks, down gulches and streams,
Adroitly as detectives shadow their man.
There, with his mule cleverly concealed, we watched
Him arrange his pack for flight. But, quick as a
Flash, we sprang by his side. Then with a bound
We hurled him a prisoner down to the ground.

There were no jails, nor degrees of crime in those days ;
No splitting of hairs, nor juries to sway by forensic
Eloquence ; no "extenuating circumstances" — for
Lawyers and justices were oftener the criminals ;
No nice points of law raised to hold the court
In doubt and muddle the jury. And besides,
The judge meant just what he said,
And criminals were hung by the neck till dead.

We meant business. He knew it, hence the resistance
Was severe and prolonged. He fought and struggled,
And swore as he fought, blaspheming the air and
Blistering the night winds with sulphurous oaths.
Never did man fight more bravely or surrender
A life more reluctantly than did Father McQuaid.
And when overpowered, like a panther encaged,
He glared at his keepers in fury and rage.

In a grove back from the river, on a sloping bluff,
The court convened. Astride a mule, with
Hands lashed behind him, sat Father McQuaid,
Beneath the loftiest pine awaiting his death.
Among the withered leaves and under the scaffold tree
The miners sat, spectators of this strange, sad scene, —
They were the judge and jury — and had come
To see the bogus parson hung.

Upon his mule he sat erect, with defiance
Strongly marked upon his face. He calmly
Watched the hangman lower the rope, and
Felt the noose pass his head, and rest upon
His beating heart. No language can describe
The prisoner's hate, as taunts and jeers
Alike came up from friend and foe. No tongue can tell
What passed within that soul of hell.

“Andy McQuaid,” said the judge, “you are a
Wolf in sheep's clothing — a fraud and a bunch
Of deception. You have proven recreant to your
Friends and stolen the funds intrusted to your care.
In this unsullied land a crime is a crime.
You stand convicted a thief, and must die.
The court gives you five minutes — and then
Prepare yourself to meet your end.”

“’T is little I’ve got to say, judge, and but one favor
To ask. As you have seen fit to respite me five
Minutes, let me enjoy them as I would.



THE TRIAL OF ANDY McQUAID.

Release these hands. I would confess, and while
Confessing brace my shattered nerves with one last
smoke.

I am a brave man, yer honor ; I do not fear death.
I am but one ; you are forty strong. Come, sir, be kind.
Mercy should precede a fate as hard as mine.

“Thanks, yer honor, the cords were tight and cut me
To the bone. ’T was a generous act, for which I’m
deeply
Grateful. I confess, sir, to deeds of graver import
Than the one I’m charged, each of which has a
Prior claim upon this wretched life of mine.
I am a banished cracksman bearing an assumed
Name. I am all that’s bad — a worthless, prodigal son —
A wandering outcast — and deserve to be hung.

“Baxter,” he said, beckoning me with his hand,
“Lend me your pipe.” And as I passed it up, he
Hissed into my ear a curse, and spake these words :
“Bob, you swore my life away. One chance is left
Me for escape — if successful we shall meet again.
Good-by, judge ; good-by, Baxter, good-by, all. When
I toss this pipe away and nod my head, why
Twitch me up, judge, and let me hang till dead.

“Ah !” he cried in feigned alarm, staring wildly up at
The ridge, and slipping the noose from his head, —
“Look, judge ! look to your safety, men ! For thick as
hail

The Indians are rushing down on the trail ! ”
The moment each eye looked back on the hill
He drove his heels in the flanks of his mule, and
Away he dashed over plaza and fell, like
A demon escaped from the pits of hell.

I tell ye, boys, 't was a wonderful sight, to see McQuaid
Leap in his flight the rocks and brambles and fallen
Trees — and then again dismount his mule, and
Scale the precipitous cliff on hands and knees,
But there he stood on the edge watching the boys
Closing the lines about him. Then doffing his boots
And tightening his belt, he cast his eyes first to his foe
And then into the seething gulf below.

Five hundred feet was a fearful leap for a
Man to take with a hope of escape. But he took it.
And every miner hurried away to the river's edge
To see his body go down with the stream,
They searched each crevice and hole for miles
Away, and dragged the bed, but found him not.
And weeks and months flew by. Then it was said
He must have perished ; he must be dead.

Perhaps a year had passed away, and Tom
And myself were returning from the Corners, and
'T was while crossing the divide between Dixon's and
Bardwell's ranch, that the sequel to this story came.
You remember the trail that winds like a serpent
Around the elbow at Langley's Gulch, and the curve

Over the deep abyss, where the rocks like tombstones
in a row

Loom up spectre-like in the cleft below ?

We had reached this point, and Tom was
Congratulating me for doubling the stakes on the
Flush I held the night before, when, startled by a
Rock thundering upon us, I had no time to
Speak, but dodged the blow which passed me
Like an arrow and struck my friend,
And both disappeared from sight
Like a shooting star in the gloom of night.

Before I had recovered from this dreadful scene
A man covered with dust sprang into the trail
And faced me. He knew my name, for he said,
“Baxter, I am your convict friend, Andy McQuaid !”
Boys, I was amazed — struck dumb with fright —
And gazed into his evil eyes with dread forebodings.
Then he drew his knife, and approached me with a
smile
That made me tremble, boys, — tremble like a child.

Had a grizzly bear risen in my path and faced
Me with a death as horrible as the human mind
Conceives; I could have leaped where to have followed
Would have been instant death.
But from this monster there was no escape, and
Fully did I realize the dreadful death, should I
Fail to kill this man. I must clutch this foe
And dash him to pieces upon the rocks below.

"No greater wonder has fallen to my eyes, than to Behold you here alive, McQuaid," I began ;
"No greater joy has fallen to my lot since I was Born, than cut your heart out !" he replied, with scorn.
"I am unarmed, you see, and have not sought this Conflict ; yet, if God loves justice and the devil has Given you away, your time has come, as it should, And your thirst for blood will end in blood."

I never could tell what passed through my mind
As his knife-blade gleamed in the sun as the lightning
Flashes along the sky. I cannot tell how the fight
Began : I can only tell how it came to an end.
The struggle, I know, was fierce and long, and
At times I thought my hour had come, as he
Held me down, with knife in hand, and
We rolled and tumbled on the rocks and sand.

The last I remember, we stood by the cliff overhang-
ing
The deep, yawning gulf below — that both were locked
In deadly embrace. Then suddenly over the brink
We fell, headlong, down together.
It seems we struck a sapling tree which broke
Our hold, and bending down laid me safely upon
The ground. There, bruised and bleeding, I sought
my foe,
And found him dead on the rocks below.

A withered pine, blackened and blazed, stands
At the head of Deadman's Bar. In the sombre hues

Of the fading day it is a spectre both grim and
brave, —

A fitting monument for Andy McQuaid.

The bar is deserted, now, and the hills and stream
Forever seem rapt in some terrible dream,

The spot is cursed ; it is known, wherever you are,
As the haunted cañon or Deadman's Bar.

Each year some wandering prospector camps upon
This bar — desecrates his grave and unearths his
bones ;

But while he loiters there the ghostly form of
Andy McQuaid is nightly seen upon the cañon's
Dome. There it stands, doffing its boots, and
Girthing its belt about its waist. Then, tossing its
Hat away, leaps into the air, and, 't is said,
The spirit sinks again to its watery bed.

The bar's unworked, the soil seems cursed with
Death, and nothing springs from its blighted womb
But weeds ; snakes crawl among its rocks ; lizards
Snap upon its heated sands ; scorpions bed in
The moldering trunks of felled trees, and toads
Spit in the poisonous air ; the raven croaks
By day, the owl by night, — such affinities are
The present tenants of Deadman's Bar.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SACRAMENTO CITY.

Fire, Fire, Fire!
Rang out from streets and lanes:
Fire, Fire, Fire!
The city's enveloped in flames.
Up in the midnight sky
The burning sparks shot high.
'Mid cries of fear and moans of woe
The fireman battled the fiery foe.

Fire, Fire, Fire!
Burst out from slumber and rest;
Fire, Fire, Fire!
Went out from darkness and death.
Chimneys and walls fell in,
Increasing the horrible din,
And men fell back in blank despair,
As flames engulfed the city fair.

THE AUTHOR.

WE next find Frank Graham keeping a small restaurant at No. 3 K Street, Sacramento City, and the sign which swung over the sidewalk was conspicuous for one thing. It told the new-comer where he might get served with an oyster stew for one dollar, — a treat which few ventured to indulge in, even in that land of promise. The business was over for the day, and he was quietly making up his cash accounts preparatory to closing his saloon for the night. Just then two young men were seen at the door surveying his premises, and a moment later

they walked forward and took seats at a table. It was hard to tell just who or what these men were. The largest of the two wore a "stove-pipe" hat, a blue flannel shirt, and a linen duster. The other a woman's night-cap, a striped calico-shirt, and a pair of blue overalls girded tightly round the waist. There was mischief there of some sort, and though nothing was said which gave him a clew to their occupation, yet from their strong, muscular frames, bronzed features, and that peculiar forecastle odor, he became convinced they were sailors just ashore on a spree. They called for oysters, and were served, and during the half hour they remained amused themselves greatly at his expense. He kept cool, however, and allowed the boys the fullest latitude for rude remarks and quaint suggestions. Upon their paying their bill, he passed out the cigars, and a moment later they disappeared in the darkness of the night.

Two hours later, while playing euchre with a party of friends at his lodgings, the cry of fire came up quick and shrill from the vicinity of J and Fourth streets. The alarm becoming general, they dropped their cards and started out. It was a chilly November night, the wind blowing from the northwest. The dust followed them in clouds as they hurried to the scene of the conflagration.

A great fire is a painful and exciting spectacle

wherever it happens ; but for them it was peculiarly distressing, because they were so isolated that no assistance could be brought in season to prevent the total annihilation of their young and prosperous city. Before midnight the fire had become master of the situation ; the fire department was utterly demoralized, and the doomed city abandoned to its fate. The usual frantic efforts were made to save property, and there was the utmost confusion and inseparable jams of overloaded teams. The piercing cries of women and children were heard as they became separated from each other in the lurid glare of that night of horrors. The flames spread with great rapidity, sweeping everything before them, right and left, and very soon reached Second Street. The heavens were lighted up for miles around, and thousands of wild brants, attracted by the light, flew into the vortex of death and were burnt to ashes ere they reached the ground.

The safety of his place of business now became of paramount interest to Graham, for every dollar he possessed in the world was invested there ; and to be left destitute in the morning without even a shelter or means to take him to the mines, was not to be thought of for a moment. But what could he do ? What could a man with one arm do in such a frightful situation ? He never could tell just how he got to the corner of J and Front streets. He

had a faint recollection of being jammed through an awning, and escaping through the second story of some store, and leaping out of the rear window into a back street. He remembered, also, his efforts to scale a barricade composed of merchandise, household effects, trunks, drays, horses and mules, dead and alive, piled up in one immense inextricable mass. But who can imagine his surprise to find upon his arrival at the Arbor his new-made acquaintances standing in front of his saloon door, one swinging his "stove-pipe" hat in the most exciting manner, while the other grasped him warmly by the hand, and hoarsely assured him they had waited for full one hour in deep anxiety to protect him from impending danger and save his stock in trade. This was done so far as practicable. Every movable article of any value was removed and deposited under the button-wood trees high up on the levee, the pictures and mirror hanging upon the walls being the last things saved, — and these at the sacrifice of the "stove-pipe" hat and linen duster.

They had accomplished all that was possible, and then, weary and sad, they settled down among the saved goods, and watched the fire-fiend lap up the few remaining blocks which marked the lines of their unfortunate city. What a ghastly picture — twenty thousand people huddled together on the outskirts of a city nearly destroyed by fire, wearily

and painfully watching, from among the fragments of their fortunes, their proud and beautiful city go down into dust and ashes.

The cool but sharp November wind bit the thinly-clad sufferers. The moon had disappeared behind the Coast Range, and in the gloom and bitterness of the early morning, Graham's sailor friends gave him a brief history of themselves, and then proposed to assist him to start a coffee stand just where they were as soon as it was sufficiently light to make the necessary arrangements. A couple of pork barrels brought from the schooner, filled with stones, with a charred door found among the *débris*, answered the purpose of a table. An old jib-stay-sail found in the vessel's locker made a capital table-cloth, while a rope, from the same source, fastened to stakes driven deep into the ground, formed a hollow square, into which he moved and formally opened the first dining-table among the famishing people, on the morning after the destruction of the city of Sacramento, November, 1852.

His new friends, who appeared to him so repulsive in the light of his chandelier the night before, and left such a disagreeable impression behind them, rebuked him for his suspicions, and convinced him by their deeds that many a well-balanced head may rest under a shabby hat, and many an honest heart beat under a ragged shirt. They were a part of the crew of the schooner *Eliza Downes*, of Belfast,

Maine, laden with light house-frames and builder's materials, shipped for an adventure, and owned by officers and crew. They had but just arrived from the "States," and were awaiting an opportunity to discharge their cargo. They had gone ashore in search of the "elephant;" and though strangers in the place, and with scarcely any interest in the fate of the stricken city, they made up their minds, when they saw how matters were going, if it were possible, to do a "good turn for the lame man" at No. 3 K Street. They were very fortunate in the disposal of their cargo, for, owing to a dearth of building materials in the burnt city, they not only found a ready sale, but received such prices as gave them a most generous return for their venture.

The schooner's signal for all hands to report for duty brought about a hasty but painful separation. They were to discharge cargo, then leave their moorings and sail immediately for San Francisco, and thence homeward. Graham wrung their hard but faithful hands as though his friendship dated back to the same district school away down among the pine-trees that shaded their humble homes on the banks of the Penobscot River. As he bade them good-by the tears rolled down his cheeks. At the last, when the gang-plank went in over the side of the schooner, and she dropped out into the stream, he swung high in air his tattered Panama and returned to his duties.

CHAPTER XVI.

POOR MAN'S CREEK.

“ With joy I leave the sunny land
That tempted me to roam.
A last farewell, bright, golden strand,
For I am going home.
No longer can the gold god keep
My feet on stranger ground;
Play on, play on, ye billows wild,
For I am homeward bound.”

TURNER.

IF you stand upon Wild Cat Ridge, as it was then called, and take in the wonderful landscape which opens up to your view, you will hardly care to leave it. You would rather that its wild and beautiful scenery should become so deeply impressed upon your memory that its charming beauties would abide with you forever. The ridge on which you stand and the one seen sloping down towards you, from the opposite direction and which seems but a continuation of this, are separated in the hollow yonder by a swift-running stream of water. The passage which the action of the water has made through its centre is both deep and narrow, and is spanned by a rudely constructed bridge which is known as the “Bridge of Sighs.” By this bridge you may cross

the creek and reach Redwood Point, so called, one of the many "ribs" which belong to the long range of "divides" between the Yuba and Feather rivers. Redwood Point, viewed from where you stand, resembles in its outlines a mammoth boar's head, the tip of whose nose has forced the water to make a long, sharp bend around it, and its permanent bed to hug the base of the precipitous hills. This stream of water, the gift of the various hills which form the deep and narrow valley, bears the name of Poor Man's Creek. It comes skipping along through miles of varied scenery, defying every obstacle in its course, and plunging through the culvert of the "Bridge of Sighs" loses itself in the Yuba.

You observe a dilapidated log cabin upon the Point yonder, and certain evidences of its having been occupied for a number of years. The grounds about the cabin and far up the hill are badly disturbed. Large rocks and boulders are unearthed; trees, uprooted, are lying dead and broken; the flume frames spanning the creek are bent or broken; the water ditch refilled and destroyed, and havoc and desolation rules supreme.

These diggings are "worked out," the Point formally abandoned, and the late proprietors on their way to San Francisco *en route* to their Eastern homes. Both the creek and the bridge were named by the late owners, who it is said abandoned the

Point some time before as being worthless, but returned in after years poor in purse but rich in experience. The maxim of a rolling stone gathering no moss proved in their case a literal fact, for after an absence of two years they returned to their old quarters so poor and discouraged that the names most expressive of their condition and sentiments were given to them. It is said the company found upon their return the original bed of the creek some two hundred feet above its present channel. This was considered at the time so inconsistent with long established theories, that the facts were only confirmed by unmistakable evidences of their success. Their efforts, after years of trials and disappointments, it would seem, had been finally crowned with success, and now they had gone to their quiet New England homes to enjoy their moderate fortunes.

Frank Graham is a member of this company, and like them is on his way home. He had pecuniarily exceeded the limits which enjoined him to continue longer in this land of chance and delusion, and now he was ready to go home. Five years of toil and suffering had paralyzed his ambitious yearnings, and prepared his mind to accept lesser results. Facts as palpable as the light of day had long since bridled his hopes and banished dreams as illusory as they were enchanting. Dame Fortune had indeed been exceptionally partial, if not cruelly unjust.

She had in many cases without stint poured her treasures into the hands of wicked and undeserving men, while the claims of the industrious and pure in heart had been hopelessly ignored. He had toiled hard to merit her esteem, he had been persistent and courageous in his efforts to please, but she had deceived on the one hand and chastised on the other. From air castles conceived from the buoyancy of his nature and built upon hopes as durable as ropes of sand, he had returned to earth emancipated and at rest. Yes, he was going home, to leave this beautiful land forever. He must consecrate his father's dust and a portion of his own body to its future greatness, and as calmly as was possible resign these sacred forfeitures to a morbid love of gain.

Yes, he is going home, and perhaps, dear reader, it is your wish to return and follow him to his little home nestling so peacefully on the banks of the Mohawk. Let us go, therefore, back to the disastrous fire and the scene upon the levee, and after connecting the intervening events, overtake him before he sails from San Francisco.

After the city of Sacramento had been rebuilt, Graham resumed his business at his old stand No. 3 K Street. With enlarged quarters and ampler experience he branched out with every encouragement of success, but the same fatal blight which

had stricken his previous efforts, and from which it seemed he could scarcely ever rally, came again, — this time in the form of a protracted flood, which completely inundated the city during the spring months of 1853. Every building was under water, business was suspended, and grave doubts as to the future of the city began to be seriously entertained. The whole volume of the American River ran through the principal streets, and the city was covered with rubbish, mud, and sluggish water. Nothing could be done, because there was nothing to do but patiently await the subsidence of the winter rains and the reconstruction of the city upon higher and safer foundation. Thousands abandoned it or sought refuge for the time being upon higher ground, miles back from the river.

For Graham there was but one course, and that was to accept the generous invitation to return to Poor Man's Creek and join a party of old friends located there, and take his chances once more as a rough-and-tumble miner. His last visit to the Arbor was made in a dory, the water then being two feet above the floor of his saloon. Such articles as were worth securing under difficulties so aggravating were fished out and the rest abandoned. The saloon was locked, the lease, together with the key, was nailed upon the outside door. A notice to the landlord that the occupant had chartered an

ark and gone in search of Mount Ararat, and should not again return, was also posted conspicuously underneath. Then Graham withdrew from the afflicted city, and with a heavy heart returned to Poor Man's Creek. There he purchased an interest in the mining operations of his friends and became a formal partner in the company.

In July, 1854, Graham left Poor Man's Creek for San Francisco, and as the stage dashed along over hills and through the valleys, he found himself occasionally lost in painful reveries. The Yuba and its receding scenery recalled again to his mind the memorable incidents of by-gone days, and the contrast between the former and his present departure was both striking and suggestive. Five years had now elapsed since his arrival in the new Eldorado, and the reminiscences of those eventful years were reviewed with feelings of touching tenderness. Of the seven associates who had struck out for the mines in the hopeful days of '49, he, it would seem, was the only survivor. Poor Littlefield, after a lingering illness, died at the Sandwich Islands. Doctor Burns perished upon his ranch on Feather River in the disastrous flood of '53. Wallace disappeared about the same time, and his fate has never been fully known. Graham's experience in the five preceding years had been a succession of failures, which, coupled with the loss of his arm, were indeed

discouraging. But his return to Poor Man's Creek seems to have been a change for the better, and he began to cast his eyes wishfully towards the Mohawk Valley. He had become weary of waiting for some reliable news from home. His fears had become excited over their unaccountable silence, while his heart assured him that all was not well in the valley of the Mohawk.

It is true the unsettled condition of the country and the imperfect arrangements of the Post Office Department were much to blame for the embarrassments caused to friends at either end of the route. And then, again, the wandering habits of the early pioneers had undoubtedly destroyed many preconceived lines of communication from which many sufferings sprang and jealousies were fostered which were never assuaged nor ever after explained.

Singular as it may seem, he had never met with any one directly from his own village who had left it subsequently to Philip Rugby, who could give him the slightest intelligence of the people he was interested in. His letters had unquestionably been answered, but had reached their destination too late for his reception, and, like thousands of others, had either perished at the sub-agencies at the mines or found an everlasting tomb at the Dead Letter Office. He had realized within the past year a sufficient sum to lift the mortgage from his mother's home

and make her declining years the most enjoyable of her life. He was glad he could return to his home without embarrassment to himself or his friends. He was pleased, aye, more than pleased, he was happy and proud to feel that never for one moment had he lost his own self-respect or fell a victim to the alluring temptations which had ruined so many. Although far from being successful pecuniarily, yet in a measure he was fully compensated by a clearer knowledge of the world, and the importance of self-reliance, which had been drilled into his memory by the force of circumstances. Then, again, the vicissitudes and the painful scenes in which he had been largely a sharer had taught him of "man's inhumanity to man," and the need of fortitude and strength of character to meet the great adversities of life. But, far above these essential elements which go so far towards sustaining a man during the deepest afflictions which follow him, he had discovered God's holy influence and felt his consoling love during the darkest hours of his misfortunes. He felt that God had watched over him in the gloom and suffering of a hospital ward, and that by his recovery and permission to return again to his home and kindred, He had shown unto him his tenderest mercy and love.

Vast and important changes had occurred during his residence in the new Eldorado. From a wild, un-

cultivated Territory, it had become a rich and prosperous State. Villages had sprung up where the log-cabin had, in its extreme loneliness, been forgotten and unknown. Townships had been platted and roads surveyed, and from her once silent hollows came up the sound of the school-house bell and the children's merry laugh, and above the forest trees the church spire with long tapering finger pointed far up into the deep blue sky. Cities had grown in wealth and significance, civil law had superseded "Judge Lynch," and social order the "vigilance committee." Reckless depravity had taken refuge in the slums, and the bowie-knife had to face the policeman's billy. Human life had become measurably safe, and personal property held with great security. The barbarous custom of hanging criminals from the limbs of trees had been modified by the interposition of the stately official, and the outlawed thief found comfortable quarters in the local prisons. The stage dashed along over the roads which were as familiar to his eyes as those which led from Utica up the Mohawk River to Rome. Major Winchester and family continued to reside at the Corner, which had grown to quite a village. The cabin prison was gone, but the "judge's stand," as it was afterwards called, was plainly seen; even the tree with its long, projecting arm, with bits of the rope still dangling in the air, was standing upon the Flats. The Downie

House sign still swung over the hotel door and creaked as hoarsely as ever as it swayed to and fro in the shifting breeze. The Ripple Spring House had deteriorated, but the same singular beauties remained. The pure, sparkling waters still continued to murmur and sing as they rippled down over their pebbly beds. Sutter's Fort had long been deserted ; its prestige and usefulness were gone, while its fame and power, like its genial host and his hospitality, were fast being forgotten. The rolling prairie, with its green sward, shaded here and there by massive oaks, was just as fresh and unchanged as ever ; but there was neither stake nor head-board standing which marked the grave of the early dead.

Sacramento City had risen from her bath cleansed and purified, and thrift and prospective greatness multiplied with each succeeding year. The Arbor was no more. It had yielded to the advancing wave of prosperity ; its light had been forever extinguished, and its efforts, however heroic and deserving, perished with fire and flood.

San Francisco had indeed changed since the early days of '49. No man dared prophesy for her then what she really is to-day. The wildest of the Arabian Nights' stories scarcely presents anything more wonderful than the story of her rise to her present grandeur and magnificence ; and she has earned, as

she is also entitled to, the proud position she occupies to-day, — the great metropolis of the State and the Queen City of the Pacific slope.

On a clear morning in September, 1854, the steamship Pacific, with three hundred passengers homeward bound to mingle again in the dreamy joys of by-gone days, took her departure from Long Wharf, San Francisco, for San Juan, Nicaragua. It will be impossible to give a perfect description of such a joyous and impressive scene, especially in a land fraught with so many endearing ties and lasting recollections as the one they were about to leave. No one could faithfully picture the internal emotions of that vast crowd, gathered as they were amid the wildest excitement, bidding adieu to those who were, in a short time, to tread their native hills again, and bear glad tidings to anxious and aching hearts at home. Try to imagine yourselves on board that proud and beautiful ship, and if possible united in sympathy with that merry throng who were now separating and exchanging the last good-byes and farewells.

The grand old ship, covered with her human freight, rises and falls in the swelling tide, and seems impatient to be released from her moorings and bid defiance to the mighty deep. The pilot takes his position at the wheel, and the master of the ship mounts the paddle-box. The cheers be-

comes more deafening, and the lingering moments more earnest, as the steamer chafes and her hawsers crack in her efforts to break away. At length the master shouts, "All aboard!" and instantly the order to "cast off the bow-line," then the pilot's signal to "start her," is heard. Now she swings away from the pier, and her powerful wheels churn the waters into a seething whirlpool. The stern-line is "cast away," and like a thing of life she moves from her berth gracefully out into the bay.

On goes that stanch good ship before a spanking breeze, leaping and plunging with sportive bravado, her decks and spars completely drenched with spray. She playfully kisses the tempestuous sea, and smiles through her tears as the gale increases. Tossing her head with wanton coquetry she laughs to scorn the wild and infuriated storm. Again she skims the subdued sea with gentle winds and calm blue sky. The moonbeams play upon the tranquil deep, while weary messmates soundly sleep.

We leave thee, land of wealth and beauty, and to-day bid thee a long farewell. When we, the pioneers of thy early glory, shall have passed away, and the memories of thy primitive magnificence forgotten, who shall repeat thy marvelous riches, who shall tell the pilgrim's story. We found thee a wild, unbroken solitude, a land of sunshine and flowers, the slumbering germ of a western empire. We leave

thee full of buried treasures, covered with myriads of wealth, and conscious of superior greatness, without a rival in the history of the world.

But let us return to Graham, who is pacing the deck with a measured tread. His thoughts are wandering back upon the banks of the Mohawk River. He fancies he is seated at his cottage door beneath a cloudless moon ; that the autumn winds are sighing through the tinted foliage ; that his mother in her accustomed mood sits amid the group rehearsing anew some old legend ; thinks that he hears the bubbling brook, and his sister's merry laugh ; then the tolling of the old church-bell the hour of prayer ; the evening song, the bugle's serenade, Major's bark, the Mohawk's murmur, are all present to his mind. Again he follows the bridle path through fern and thicket, and leaps the brook into the old county road as he had done many times before. Again he stands on the portico of the Rugby mansion as the moon goes down behind the "big bend" in the Mohawk River. And Jane stands with him. Aye, his blessed Jane ! Ah, it was so far in years since last they met, and yet so near to memory dear, that the space doth seem but the flitting mist of some evening dream. Yes, there she stands, so confidently, and nestles so fondly beneath his winter's cloak, her hand clasped in his, her sweet, pretty face against his own ; and he knows that she but expressed the

holiest purposes of her heart, when she uttered these well remembered words, "Your visits will be ever welcome to Rugby Farm."

What would be his reception now, disabled for life, his profession gone, his future usefulness still to be acquired? Could he stand before Squire Rugby's frowning face? Would Jane plead for him now as she had done in the warmth of her early love? Oh, no; it could not be expected. They were both young then, and overwhelmed with passionate attachment for each other. They were too young to have formed a contract so hazardous and compulsory. Things had changed. They were both older, and perhaps wiser. It would be only just and manly to annul the old and then sue for a new engagement. Thus, alone, beneath the waning moon he paced the deck, and while the "stars proclaimed night's cheerless noon," he held sweet communion with his own conflicting thoughts. But beneath the gathering fears which ever and anon arose in his mind like a grim spectre in the gloom of night, there still remained that strong and overwhelming faith in Jane Rugby's constancy and love. How sweet were her parting words, how well remembered, how oft repeated — and as the moon went down beneath the troubled sea, and the vessel rocked with wind and wave, he saw in his imagination the following bow of promise seemingly blazoned upon

the silvered sky: "Frank, darling, I have suffered for you so much, I must continue to suffer for your sake. This suffering is the price I pay for my undying love for you. Promise me, darling, before God, in whose presence we stand to-night, you will be faithful and come back again to me."

CHAPTER XVII.

HOME AGAIN.

DREAM on, thou troubled heart, dream on!
Indulge in the joys which are thine!
The bitterest potion which fills up the cup
Are found in the dregs of the wine.
To-morrow thy dreams are to end,
Thy fondest hopes shall decay,
Then sip from the cup the joys that are thine,
And dream on, dream on while you may.

THE AUTHOR.

ON the arrival of the morning train at Fernwood Station a gentlemanly-looking man stepped lightly out upon the platform, and, taking a long sweeping glance at the surroundings, walked rapidly towards the Mohawk River. He was a young man some twenty-six years of age, of dark complexion and wearing a full, heavy beard. A warm traveling shawl fastened about the neck partially concealed an empty sleeve looped up from the elbow and tied to a button upon his breast with a piece of black ribbon. It was two miles from the station to the village centre, and the stage with the mail and passengers whirled past him as he left the road and struck off through familiar paths known to him long years ago. It was the desire to follow these well

remembered walks and pass unobserved to his mother's home, that induced Frank Graham to reject the privilege and allow the stage to depart without him.

As he hastened along under the leafless trees, a cold, frosty wind blew the crispy leaves far in advance of his feet, and seemed to admonish him that an approaching storm was near. He walked briskly down the sloping hills and followed the old "Pond Lily" road to the left of the cemetery which led to the bridge that spanned the Mohawk River. His heart, hitherto agitated, became filled with strange emotions as he neared his cottage home. The remembrances of by-gone days gathered thick and fast as his eyes rested upon the scenes of earlier days. He felt a peculiar faintness settling down upon his heart as he witnessed the varied changes on every side, and a shadow of some painful calamity weighed heavily upon him. Several villagers passed him on the way whose countenances seemed familiar, but they knew him not. He reached the curve in the road where he saw for the last time his mother's face as she stood at the garden gate exposed to the piercing wind on a cold December morn. He cast a quick but anxious look around the hill, his eyes following the drowsy Mohawk and resting upon the church and its long, tapering spire. He saw the cliff, with its wrinkled face, the woods, the water-course, its noisy stream still splashing

down its side — but his cottage home was gone. A cry of anguish came up out of the depths of his soul ; his tortured heart seemed to sink within him. He stood as one riveted to the spot and gazed in painful astonishment at the complete annihilation of his once happy home. That pebbled brook which sang so sweetly and filled his boyhood dreams with strange delight had ceased forever. A grist-mill stood upon that sacred spot, whose thirsty wheel gulped down that never-ceasing stream. The picket fence, the graveled walks, the jessamine bowers, and deeply-ivied walls were all gone. Not a relic left to mark the spot where it had once stood. He approached the miller, who had watched him from the door of the mill with seeming curiosity, and asked with fear and trembling to be directed to the residence of Mrs. James Graham.

“Oh, sir ; she be dead. Been dead, sir, these three years, and you’ll find her residence in the churchyard on yonder hill.”

“The children ? Well they be gone away. They left one after the other soon after their mother died, and so far as I know they have not been heard of since. Frank, the oldest boy, is dead. He was killed some years ago out in the gold mines in California. I never knew just what happened to him ; but you can find out, if you wish the particulars, at the post-office up in the square.”

Frank Graham stood immovable as a pillar of stone, and gazed into the face of the miller in breathless silence. Shocked at this painful intelligence, and stupefied from the suddenness of the blow, he sat down upon the steps of the mill overwhelmed with grief and astonishment. The wind had increased in violence, the lowering clouds grew darker and darker, and the air, hitherto chilly and raw, was now filled with sleet and rain, — but still he moved not. Buried in the bitterness of his own thoughts, with the folds of his shawl wound tightly about him, he seemed completely overpowered with the magnitude of his loss and the destruction of his home. Should he continue his investigations farther? Would he dare ask this honest yeoman of the Rugbys of Rugby Farm? Would he confirm his suspicions or dispel these dreadful fears? could he dare to hope, amid the desolation which had covered his father's house like a pall of death, to find *one* faithful heart that would weep "tear for tear and give back sigh for sigh?" Was it joy or sorrow that must follow these most anxious inquiries? could he trust his poor heart to yet greater strain, and harass a mind already bewildered and in peril? Yet it were better he should know — far better, if the cup was his, to drink it at a single draught than sip its poison drop by drop. If he had returned to a home utterly destroyed, and its memories hopelessly for-



GRAHAM AND THE OLD MILLER.

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saken, without a kindred spirit either to assuage his grief or shed a tear amid its ruins, it were best he should know, and know it quickly.

“Oh, yes,” replied the miller; “there has been great changes, and vast improvements made in this portion of the Mohawk valley.”

Yes, many of their prominent citizens had gone home to their fathers with ripened years and calendars filled with good deeds. He knew the Rugbys well. The good old squire was dead. His son Philip had fallen into bad company. He had embezzled funds belonging to the bank—had forged his father’s name, and had become a wanderer and an outlaw. The old lady still lived upon the farm, which had been impoverished through the conduct of her son. Her daughter Jane had *married*, and gone with her husband to Calcutta.

This announcement, added to that of his mother’s death, so unexpected, and yet so pathetically told, were the drops which filled his cup of misery to the brim; and thanking the miller for his courtesy he withdrew to conceal his feelings and hide his scalding tears.

The death of Mr. Graham, and the subsequent report that his son had gone to a premature grave, had crushed the last hope of that wife and mother. Her resources were suddenly cut off, and the grim-fisted Shylock had rapped upon that cottage door.

The mandates of the law had driven her with her little ones from that home. The auctioneer's hammer had fed the cravings of that miser's heart. She died full of hope and love, to sleep in the arms of Him who doeth all things well.

He wandered over the hills and through the vales and viewed the scenes of earlier days. The faithful dog which had shared his joys and sorrows stood guardian of the village store, and knew him not. The old spotted cow, which he and Major had so often chased through the "deep tangled wildwood," stood lowing at the stranger's gate. His father's library, his paintings, his collections of birds and curiosities, graced the walls of those who knew not their value. The old oaken clock which had marked the hours of fourscore years, and the arm-chair in which his mother sang her evening lullabies, had passed to others' keeping. His sister's playthings, and his own little ship, with snow-white sails and tiny masts, were the sport and amusement of a new generation. Go where he would, some memento of departed days appeared to awaken afresh his grief and prolong his tears.

Many of his dear old friends who had prophesied for him such a brilliant future had passed away, never to return. Most of his schoolmates had married, and many had sought new homes, and he stood in the midst of the holiest of his recollections, seem-

ingly forgotten and unknown. He had purposely concealed his identity from every one but Aunt Bertha, his mother's faithful friend and nurse, who beheld him with startled wonder and surprise. She welcomed him tenderly to her humble home, and explained to him the cause of his mother's illness and her subsequent death. She corroborated the miller's statement with reference to the Rugbys at Rugby Farm. She had heard of Miss Rugby's marriage; that was all. She had no reasons for discrediting the rumor. She warmly defended Jane Rugby's devotion and innocence, and while he continued her guest spared no pains to sweeten the bitterest draught of his life. Philip Rugby had indeed proven a prodigal son, for not only had he betrayed his father's confidence, and dishonored his name, but had absconded, leaving a tottering home to fall in ruins, and a "father's gray hairs to go down in sorrow to the grave." Jane Rugby had married. She had married with the fullest assurance that Frank Graham was dead and buried, and up to the very last moment solemnly believed that such was indeed the fact. She had married a sea-captain, engaged in the East India trade. He was part owner in his ship, and as his wife preferred the sea to being alone, they had sailed together upon their second voyage but a few months previous to Graham's return. Realizing that she was forever lost to him, he

abandoned with Christian resignation all hope of ever seeing her again.

He continued the guest of Aunt Bertha while arranging with the sexton the future care of his mother's grave. The time had now come when he must leave these sacred scenes and never again return. He must go, he cared not whither, make new friends, and lay the foundation for a new home. He paid a last visit to his mother's grave — a neat little stone had been erected to mark that hallowed spot; the flowers were still blooming, their perfume scenting the chilly air. The sun had settled behind the forest trees, the crispy leaves crumbled beneath his feet. The cold November wind bit sharp, and the fading sunset warned him it was time to go, and yet, mute and sad, he stood, oblivious to the closing day.

This, dear reader, is but one case among the thousands of a like nature which are the results of a morbid love of wealth. Mr. Graham, as you have seen, was surrounded by many of those blessings which help to sweeten the cares of life, but gold, that wily tempter, allured him to an untimely grave. He left a pure and doting widow, whose pallid cheeks became the channels for a thousand tears. They left four orphan children of tender years, bereft of home and kindred, and whose guileless hearts had never known a moment's sorrow.

Gather ye about your hearth-stones, and bless the sanctity of your humble homes. Be kind to your little ones, and weave a garland of roses about their youthful brows. Gather them unto you, as the hen gathereth her brood, and forsake them not, that they may become a staff to your old age, and a blessing to your declining years. Be mindful, that we are all traveling to a land of sunshine and flowers, whose sun never sets, and whose flowers neither droop nor die. Be ye watchful and wary, lest the glitter of wealth and the love of display should hide the right path and lead you astray.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THANKSGIVING WEEK.

'The various mercies from above,
Matured the swelling grain;
A kindly harvest crowns thy love,
And plenty fills the plain."

ANOTHER year had rolled around, and Thanksgiving Day, the most sacred holiday in the year, having been publicly announced from the pulpits throughout the old Commonwealth, was being looked forward to with grateful anticipations by every heart that claimed a home within the limits of New England. Already the venerable turkey and his progeny had succumbed to the annual sacrifice, and in every direction his headless body could be seen ignominiously suspended to public gaze. Already his friendly associate, the motherly hen, and brood, had passed under the guillotine, and, disrobed even of her night-dress, hung shamefully exposed upon the street corners. Already the markets were groaning under the accumulated luxuries of the season, and the thoroughfares were filled with excited vendors, anxious to dispose of their stock in trade while

prices were stiff. Already the careful buyer watched the wavering vane for a "break in the market," while the country huckster, alive to the importance of a "cold snap," watched with equal zeal the rise and fall in the thermometer. Heavily laden trucks and teams filled with merchandise *en route* to the great outlets were seen cutting their way through the surging masses that blocked the avenues of trade. The practical housewife and devoted mother were busy as bees completing their manifold duties, which demanded fresh outlays, and articles too numerous to mention must be purchased at whatever cost to increase the attractions and enhance the interest of the occasion. Rooms must be beautified, tables adorned, and the present Thanksgiving dinner supersede all other efforts of their married lives.

The tender associations which cluster around Thanksgiving Day will always make it a day of great social interest, and for generations to come it will continue the most enjoyable day of the year. For coming as it does, just after the completion of the harvest, when the golden grains have been garnered, and the fruits of the fields gathered and stored, it seems to finish with singular fitness the season's prosperity, and crown, as it were, with glory the fullness of the departing year.

The Tuesday previous to Thanksgiving Day began with a violent snow-storm, which subsequently

turned into sleet. It was followed by a strong easterly wind which drifted the snow into vast ricks, and made travel both difficult and dangerous. Without a moment's cessation it snowed and rained from two o'clock in the morning. Business was interrupted, and the schools held no sessions. It was the day usually assigned by market-men for arranging and exposing their goods for sale, but of course such was the severity of the storm the custom had to be abandoned. In Boston it was dismal enough, and the surrounding country was but little less than a bed of mire and slush. The fog hung low and the city was enshrouded in it all day. Darkness in all places not near the door or window compelled a general use of gas in stores and counting-rooms. Few pedestrians were in the streets, and these, with their heads bundled up as big as bushel baskets, were seen reeling and staggering against the increasing fury. There was but little shopping done; comparatively few teams were exposed, and scarcely anything could be seen excepting the shamefully over-loaded omnibus with jaded horses tugging and smarting under the lashes of an "impious whip," determined to "make time," — and Boston hid itself from the constant downfall of snow and rain. All who were forced out into the storm seemed to be put on the defensive. Every umbrella was canted to the northeast. Everybody and everything dripped.

Hat-brims were water-sheds; collars were turned up; pantaloons were tucked into boots; rubber overgarments extending from top to toe were everywhere, and it rained and snowed, fast and furious, all the early morning, all the afternoon, and into the night. It was rain and snow everywhere, and gloom and darkness covered the land.

Faneuil Hall and Quincy Markets could best, perhaps, show the effects of that storm, for there were centred the night before the great staple articles so indispensable for the approaching festivities, and loads upon loads of poultry and country produce were seen that morning strung along through the different avenues almost buried in the snow-drifts, deserted apparently by their owners, and their contents abandoned to the mercy of the storm. Improvised stalls, occupying "commanding corners" for trade, and "desirable locations" for jobbing, had long been taken up, and the traveling vender with his hand-cart hugged the curbstone with his straight Rhode Island birds as "pretty as pinks." The storm had struck the "early birds" that morning, and the "worms" were seen lounging about the warm, comfortable saloons under the shadow of the Cradle of Liberty. Rain, snow, waste, and destruction went hand in hand. Teams, stalls, hand-carts, stood where they had been arranged the night before, and many of their owners stood guard in the

chilly air, wet to the skin, bluer than whet-stones, and waiting for an opportunity to sell out. There were turkeys upon the awnings, turkeys suspended to hooks and frames; there were turkeys and chickens everywhere, but nobody there to buy.

"Halloo, Skowhegan! How's turkeys selling to-day?" asked a neighboring huckster, who with a sad grin of irony stood eyeing his competitor from a doorway through the drifting snow and rain.

"Sell? neighbor!" said the Maine man, his face resembling a piece of honey-combed tripe and his beard covered with icicles, — "Sell?" he again exclaimed, with a whole volume of invectives boiled down into one of immeasurable hate, and dropping a quid of tobacco into the palm of his hand he threw it savagely at a cock turkey fastened to a pole which resembled a defeated candidate after an election.

"Say, Newmarket! Is there any place hereabouts, as you knows on, as would take a turkey for a good square drink?"

"Well, I dun know, Skow. I knows where we can get a drink for a quarter — but turkeys, you see, are dreadful poor property hereabouts." And a moment later the twin venders, with a sickly looking turkey slung over their shoulders, were seen to enter the "Bite" tavern in the Square and "smile" over the mutual losses of the hour.

"Halloo, Chelsea ! What, are ye dead ?" exclaimed a tall, raw-boned woman from Salem Street, wearing a pair of No. 10 rubbers and a green plaid shawl over her head, her skirts wet and dragging in the slush.

"Dead ! No !" replied the little man, with eyeglasses resting upon the tip of his nose, and squatting upon a box of poultry with a mammoth umbrella over his head.

"Not dead, madam, but sleeping — taking a nap — that's all. What do ye want ?"

"What do I want ? Why I want to buy a turkey," said the dame, with a monster cabbage under her arm and clinging with a death-like grip to a pair of drowned "spring chickens." "Come, wake up !" and Chelsea handed out some half dozen fine-looking birds.

"Well, old man ; them kind of goods are cheap to-day. What's yer price ?"

"Yes, madam. We're giving them away — just giving them away — only eighteen cents."

"Eighteen cents ! What ails you ? Been offered a fine one for ten !"

"A crow, madam ; must have been a crow, not a turkey."

"Devil a crow, old man, and don't you forget it. Come, now, I'll give ye twelve." And she grabbed a twelve-pound turkey by the legs and ran her long,

thin nose up into its stomach, and then added, with a contemptuous smile, "that rooster is sick — he's had the jaundice — and he's musty, old man!"

"It's you, granny," said the little man under the umbrella, sharply, "it's you that's musty. Put the bird down!"

"What!" she screamed, loud enough to wake the dead, and swinging the turkey high up in the air. "What!" yelled this piece of injured innocence, her eyes snapping like tallow candles and glaring into those of the huckster's with a malignant hate. "What!" she again exclaimed, "insult a lone woman with five children and a sick man to home!" and quick as a flash of light, she brought that turkey down like a sledge hammer upon the little blue awning which instantly collapsed, and before Chelsea could realize the situation she gave him a fearful whack over the head, amid the cries of "Go in old woman, go in!" from faces seen under wagon-covers and awnings.

A moment later this representative of Copps Hill was seen going very fast up Union Street with the twelve-pound turkey in one hand and her cabbage and spring chickens in the other, in "search of the perlice," who of course were "in out of the wet," serenely engaged over a hot sling with Billy Watts at the Marshall House.

There were many similar scenes witnessed during

that cold, blustering storm, and many personal encounters of a far more amusing character between huckster and marketman ; but cold and disagreeable as were the surroundings, nothing seemed to disturb the steady good temper and the general flow of wit on every side, and it is said that many heavy sales were effected "between drinks" on that bleak November day.

At the opening of the present chapter we find our friend Graham in business in the vicinity of the Quincy Market, and devoting the spare day to posting up his books. The storm still continued to rage with great fury, and while he was bending over his desk a young gentleman entered the counting-room, and said, as he shook the snow from his wraps, —

"Good morning, Frank."

"Hullo, Gus. What in time brought you down here to-day?"

"Come to see you, old fellow. Why don't you have a fire."

"That's quite a compliment. Pray sit down."

"Don't fuss with the stove, Frank, for I'm in a fearful hurry to catch the next train out."

"Well, let me show my appreciation of your visit."

"You can best do that by accepting the terms which has made this visit indispensable."

"Pray, what are they? I can almost promise you in advance."

"Nothing but an invitation from father and mother to take dinner with us Thanksgiving Day. We are going to have a quiet little time by ourselves, and a sleigh-ride after supper. I promised to bring out your answer to-night. Come, don't hesitate — but say Yes — we are not asking you to attend a funeral."

"Have you come from Bromfield Street through this pelting storm for that purpose?"

"Yes, I have, — with the exception of a message to the bank, — and I don't see how you can very well say No."

"Nor neither can I, Gus."

"Then you will come?"

"Yes, I should be unworthy your parent's esteem to refuse."

"Then take the 1 P. M. train, and I will meet you with our team upon its arrival. It's all settled, is it?"

"Yes ; I shall surely come if the train does."

"Well, then I'll be off," said his friend as he wound the wraps about his head and shoulders, and then added, "What message have you for the girls?"

"Oh, tell them not to kill me with any more surprises. I have n't fully recovered from the last."

"Beats the Dutch, don't it, Frank. But there ! they are everlastingly conjuring up some necromancy

or other to bother and fret us fellows. I should n't wonder if they sprang another trap upon you yet, that will be worse than the last."

"Don't see how they can, Gus, for I have become familiar with their schemes and tactics, and to be forewarned is simply to be forearmed."

"That is quite true; still they are such adepts in their *rôle* that it would n't surprise me at all if they "panned" you out a wife yet."

"That would indeed be a surprise," said Graham, laughing, and pressing his friend's hand as he said good-by; and then added, "But, Gus, it's hard to 'catch old birds with chaff.'"

"Yes, I know, Graham, and yet I often think of the many stubborn facts which occur daily to disprove your dogma and confirm the doctrine of predestination, which affirms, if it does not convince us all, how impossible it is to avoid the inevitable."

"I am to understand, then, that my spiritual affinity is now floating about in the air in your neighborhood, and upon the certainty of this visit hangs a story and a cheap wedding?"

"I cannot discuss the subject, Frank. I have not the time, but I will venture to say this much. I believe for every Jack there's a Gill. I know you are a man of warm impulses and strong social habits, and that your sympathetic feelings crave a companionable and faithful friend which cannot be realized outside of a married life."

"Go on, Gus; this is beautiful," said Graham, crunching a cracker.

"I know," continued his friend, giggling, "that you are yearning for just such a companion. I feel that there is now existing somewhere — I cannot presume to say where — but somewhere — there exists a woman who is every way adapted to your wants and tastes; that she is looking for just such a man to satisfy her longings, as you are for a woman to assuage yours; and that both of you are waiting for the golden opportunity which shall consummate both your desires. It may not be this year, nor the next, that this meeting shall take place; but mark me, whenever this woman and you come together, whether it happens in Boston or New York, you will know it, and she will know it, and nothing short of a first-class death will prevent a happy union — and don't forget it."

"Should your predictions ever be verified," said Graham, as his friend strode out into the storm, "I will join your church, and bless the fates which revealed to the nineteenth century such a stupendous wonder."

Thanksgiving morning opened clear but cold, and Graham, seated in the car, followed with his eyes the hills, meadows, and beach as the train ploughed through the snow-drifts over the marshes by the sea.

The little peaceful villages nestling against the frozen hills and the deep blue sky, with their unassuming churches standing in their midst like watchful shepherds guarding their flocks, were passed in succession, and in an hour the train dashed into the famous old city of witches.

There is little to be said in reference to what occurred in the interval between Graham's leaving the Mohawk valley and his unexpected appearance as a clerk in a "down town" house in the city of Boston. His disability rendered a change of profession necessary, and he sought and acquired in that city a mercantile education, which will account for the position he filled at the opening of this chapter. With a private family at the West End of the city he found a neat and peaceful home, where he was gradually, but surely, wearing out the sad and blistering memories of the past. Without a friend or an acquaintance, he had gone to that great city and mapped out the hidden future before him. Concealing from the world the diversities of his past pursuits, confiding to no one the disasters which had befallen his father's house, he lived the quiet and secluded gentleman, bearing an aching heart which refused to be comforted.

Jane Rugby's name had never passed his lips, and with the exception of the casket containing the little gifts, which lay at the bottom of his trunk, no

one would have suspected that such a person had ever lived. Once in a while, in the gloom of the hour and the seclusion of his chamber, that still cherished remembrance of other days would be brought to the surface and its contents tenderly examined. He would composedly retrace his steps through fern and thicket to Rugby Farm, and recall the words that fell from her lips, as she fastened the rosebud to the lapel of his coat. The tender hours spent together upon Rugby Hill, the anxious scenes with the Squire at the farm, and the ever-memorable separation upon the balcony on that chilly November night long years ago,—the recollections of these eventful days, and the sacred memories which clustered around them, would revive in all their vividness those happy days, the happiest of his life, and infuse into his heart the only consolation acceptable, that their separation was both forcible and a monstrous wrong. The letter, “more expressive than wise,” would be read over and over again. The ring, “the emblem of my plighted love” embroidered on a black velvet pocket which held it, and, “keep it as a talisman, and return it, when your love for me is dead,” finely written upon a card and attached with a silken cord, was after a while laid by its side, and “last but not least, the picture of your affianced wife,” was gazed upon fondly and with a never-dying zeal.

Reader, if Jane Rugby was a married woman with a family growing up around her, what right had Graham with these souvenirs? Why had he not buried them under the head-stone of his mother's grave? Why had he not destroyed them, since they could never be of service to him, and the spirit which actuated the giver at the time was as dead as she had proven base and heartless, and their possession only a quickening torment and an everlasting stinging pain. As was his purpose so it should have ended, — he should have banished her name and image from his heart and thought, and cast these tokens, the reminders of her weakness and perfidy, into the depths of the sea. But he had not done so — as you see — and why — simply because his love for Jane Rugby was not yet dead. If she had proven false to him and repudiated the dearest ties of the human heart, not so with him — his love had been built upon a rock too firm to be so easily washed away. The future was long and comparatively narrow, there was a possibility of their yet meeting again — should such an event ever happen it would be worth the sacrifice of *one* life to prove the strength of man's character and show how true he might have been to her.

CHAPTER XIX.

THANKSGIVING DINNER IN THE CITY OF WITCHES.

"Come! if you come not, I can wait,
My faith, like life, is love;
My will—not little: my hope much;
The patient are the strong

"Yet come, ah come! The years run fast,
And hearts grow swiftly cold—
Hearts too; but while blood beats in mine
It holds you, and will hold.

"And so before you it lies bare—
Take it or let it lie,
It was an honest heart; and yours
To all eternity."

ANON.

FRANK GRAHAM was the guest of Joshua Livingstone, a retired sea-captain who lived in the central part of the city of Salem. He had formed his acquaintance during the voyage from Nicaragua to New York. This acquaintance had ripened into a friendship which had continued ever since. His oldest son, Augustus, was about the same age as Graham, between whom there had sprung up an attachment which had never been disturbed. His daughters, Fanny and Mabel, were both married and lived at home with their parents. These made a pleasant family group, and contributed much to

the enjoyments of this charming New England home.

Upon Graham's arrival at the home of the Livingstones he was met by, and of course became the personal guest of, his young friend. Both gentlemen were engaged in arranging their toilets for dinner, and listening alternately to the noise and clatter which the girls were making as they scampered from one room to another. The air was strongly impregnated with the savory odors, in which the "Rhode Island fancy" contributed seemingly the largest share. The company were still arriving, the gentlemen being in charge of the Captain, while the ladies were being entertained by the girls in the parlor.

"I tell you what it is, Frank," said his friend, as he twisted the ends of his moustache between his waxen fingers, "those witches down-stairs are planning a campaign against some of us fellows, and you had better open the door and listen."

"Well, I don't see what good that will do, unless to show them they are suspected and stimulate them to double their craftiness.

"Perhaps after dinner we had better go over to the club for a while," suggested Gus.

"What! retreat in the face of your enemies! That's cowardly. Better capitulate or even surrender unconditionally. Who is the lady that's

singing in the parlor?" he added, stopping suddenly in the midst of his sentence.

"Oh, that's a school-marm from Ipswich. She taught school here some years since and sister Fan was one of her pupils."

"She has a sweet pretty voice," remarked Graham, "but a little too sad to be popular. It seems as though I had heard that voice before—somewhere in my rambles. What is her name?"

When he asked this question he stood looking out of the chamber window, and his face wore an unusually sad and dejected expression.

"Miss — Miss — Miss — somebody," said his friend, deeply interested in the effects of the comb and brush upon his nicely cut side whiskers. "I thought," he continued, "I could spit her name right out—but let me see— Ah, I have it— Bugbee — yes, Bugbee—that's it."

Miss Bugbee continued to sing. Her full rich voice seemed to rise up out of the floor and fill the room with its strange and affecting melody. As the following words burst from her lips, distinct and clear, and fell upon the ears of the young men, they stopped and listened, —

"Oh, no ; I never mention him,
His name is never heard ;
My lips are now forbid to speak
That once familiar word.
From sport to sport they hurried me,

To banish my deep regret,
But if he loves, as I have loved,
He never can forget."

"Why, Graham, what ails you? Don't you feel well?" questioned his friend, feelingly.

"Never felt better in my life, Gus, never. Why — what made you ask such a question?"

"Well, nothing beyond a slight pallor I fancied I saw in your face."

"You must n't forget I am in the city of witches, of whose subtile influences I am cautioned to beware."

Rap — rap — rap.

"Come in," said Gus, "Come in."

"The dinner, gentlemen, is on the table, and the company are waiting for you," said the servant, peeping through the door.

"We'll be right down," said Livingstone, examining himself carefully before the glass.

"Come, Frank, brace up," said his friend, as he held the door in his hand. "Let us go down and behold some of your much dreaded witches. By the right flank, forward march."

"And fall a prey to their delusive charms," added Graham, laughing, as he followed his friend down the stair-way.

"Nothing of that nature can ever harm you, old fellow; for, like Macbeth, you have a charmed life."

"And yet these prophetic deceptions led him to his death," replied Graham, as they entered the hall.

"In your case let us hope the scene will be reversed," said his friend, as they walked into the dining-room.

The dining-hall for the occasion had been enlarged and to meet the requirements of an unusually large number of guests the tables were extended into the sitting-room by removing the folding doors. Dinner, as Dolly had said, was all on the table and the guests were being waited upon as rapidly as possible. The young gentlemen walked quickly to the head of the table and took the seats assigned them. They stood for a moment in full view of the company, while young Livingstone introduced his friend. Then both bowed politely, and dropped quietly into their seats.

Mr. and Mrs. Livingstone were in the very best of spirits. The waiters were kept busy in passing the various side dishes, when suddenly a goblet fell with a crash upon the table, spattering the water in every direction, instantly arresting the clatter of knives and forks and the hum of voices. A faint scream accompanied the clatter of broken glass, and although it was partially drowned by the confusion caused by ladies and gentlemen rising to their feet quickly and closing in around the scene

of the accident, still a low, piercing wail was distinctly heard by Augustus Livingstone and his friend. "A lady has fainted, one of the guests," came up from one gentleman to another in a whisper, and a moment later she was taken up tenderly and borne away.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Talbot, in a profound whisper to her neighbor, "how sudden! why it gave me such a shock!"

"How is the lady?" inquired Mrs. Banister, addressing Mrs. Livingstone, who a few minutes later resumed her seat at the table.

"Oh, she is quite comfortable and very happy," said the lady addressed, with a pleasant smile and a significant wink.

"It was not a shock of paralysis then, as I feared," inquired a lady from the opposite side of the table.

"Oh, no," said the lady spoken to; "nothing so serious as that, I hope. The doctor," she added, "calls it nervous prostration, caused from sudden fright. She will be all right presently."

"Sudden fright!" exclaimed Mrs. Talbot. "Why, how dreadful. Pray, where is the monster?" said the lady, as she stared inquiringly into the face of each gentleman with assumed gravity and alarm.

"It is you, Graham," said young Livingstone, as he passed the celery; "I'll bet my bottom dollar it is you."

"More than likely the poor girl has seen one of your infernal hobgoblins, which infests this unfortunate city."

"You remember, I told you the devil would be to pay here to-night."

"Yes, I know it, and I am gradually yielding to his cursed influences."

"What was the name your mother gave the lady, was it Bugbee?"

"Augustus," said his mother, interrupting, "I would speak to you—if you have finished your dinner."

"Yes, mother, I will follow you." And Graham returned to his friend's room alone.

When young Livingstone came back to his room he walked quietly up to the fire-place and said, while his face beamed all over with pleasure: "Come, Frank, it's your turn now; the plot is thickening, and you're in for it. Mother wants to see you in her private room."

"Wants to see me in private!" said Graham, in surprise. "You are joking, Gus."

"Not a bit of it. Go along down; you cannot fear my mother, surely," said Livingstone, lighting a cigar. "Go ahead," he continued. "She is waiting for you."

"Trust myself with your mother! Well, yes, I think I can; but if this private interview does not

prove the prelude to a grand comedy, in which, as usual, I am assigned the heaviest part, you can shoot me with an onion."

"Remember, you are invulnerable," said his friend, with a deep chuckle.

"Invulnerable, indeed!" exclaimed Graham, nervously, as he strode towards the door. "Why, nothing can withstand the plots which these girls can get up. Already they have commenced to inflate one of their diabolical balloons, and in its ascension, mark me, you will miss your friend, and when you find him, if you ever do, it will be a-straddle of Bunker Hill Monument, or—some other eminence equally fatal."

"More likely find you in the arms of some beautiful witch, floating about in the moonbeams intoxicated with hymeneal joys," whispered his friend, as the former disappeared in the hall.

"Mrs. Livingstone, did you wish to see me?" asked Graham, as that lady responded to his summons.

"Yes, I did, Frank; please walk in. I have a patient here," she began.

"Indeed," exclaimed Graham, suspiciously scanning the form upon the sofa.

"Yes," she resumed, "and she has expressed a wish to see you."

"I feel deeply flattered, Mrs. Livingstone, indeed I do," said Graham, bowing with profound civility.

"She has," again resumed the lady, enjoying the secret, and realizing how supremely ignorant he was of the impending revelation,— "she has made many inquiries concerning you, and regards these simultaneous visits of yours in the light of a special act of Divine Providence. She now feels that this interview is absolutely essential to her recovery, and perhaps necessary to your future happiness."

"This is delightful," added Graham, with a laugh.

"Be that as it may, Graham, she has conceived the idea that this meeting is inevitable, and hopefully awaits the remedies which can alone save her from a long and painful illness, and possibly a premature grave."

"I like these little side shows!" exclaimed Graham, pacing the room; "they are quite refreshing, Mrs. Livingstone. I am glad you are taking a part in the comedy arranged for to-night. The girls must appreciate your peculiar merits if I don't. It is a little too late, however, for a midsummer's night's dream, and I am not equal to the part of Romeo. Assign me, please, as the fatherly Friar, for then I can kiss the maiden with impunity."

"Come, dear," said Mrs. Livingstone imprinting a kiss upon her patient's lips, "Come, be not afraid; for 'all's well that ends well,' and bowing, with a mischievous smile upon her face and a merry twinkle in her eyes, she withdrew, leaving the invalid and her physician alone.

As the patient timidly arose to her feet and removed the veil which had partially concealed her face Graham stepped back and uttered a deep cry of startled wonder, and a name which had once been to him so tender and familiar, died upon his lips, in one long stifled whisper. For some moments he neither moved nor spoke, but gazed fixedly upon the face before him. A change soon became perceptible; the previous ten years of his life seemed to pass rapidly in review; the slender girl of seventeen stood before him now developed into a full-grown woman; the delicate tints and girlish bloom were gone, but the same lines of character and singular beauty still remained, only more fully defined. And she, poor girl, trembling before his searching look, with hands clasped before her, and eyes dimmed with tears, she stood the very picture of hope, smiling upon a new-born day.

“Jane Rugby!” he exclaimed, impassionately.

“In God’s name is this you?”

“Yes, I am Jane Rugby of Rugby Farm.”

“And do you still bear that name?”

“Yes; I have never borne any other!”

“Then you are not married, Jane?”

“I am betrothed — but not married.”

“Betrothed, did you say? Then you have sought this interview simply to tear afresh the wound, and teach me to hate your memory?”

"No, Graham ; indeed no. God forbid. You misunderstood me. Don't leave me ; pray don't go !"

"But you say you are betrothed, and yet you once pledged yourself most solemnly to me."

"Yes, Graham ; I remember well those happy days, but they extend back to long years ago."

"Nevertheless, those vows, so sacredly plighted, were registered in heaven."

"And so were yours, alongside of them."

"True, Jane ; and there they still remain. They have never yet been canceled."

"Neither have mine, my poor dear boy. Oh, bless you for that avowal."

"Then it is I, Jane, to whom you are betrothed ; and do you still love me as fondly as ever ?"

"Yes, Frank ; I am to you just what I was ten long years ago — your 'faithful queen.'"

"And you have been true to me all these years ?"

"Yes, my poor boy. I could not have done less."

"Kneel, darling ; kneel with me, and before God, and in his sight, let us pour out the fullness of our hearts before Him, — tell how boundless are our joys, how immeasurable are our thanks ; beseech Him to bless this reunion and sanctify our immediate marriage."

"Seal it, Frank dear, seal it with eternity's kiss."

"From this hour, Jane, no more separations, but, one and indivisible, we will tread life's thorny path

together, forgiving and forgetting all things but the memories which cluster about this most fortunate and happy meeting."

"Could there be anything more gratifying, more beautiful, or more deserving, my boy?"

"No, darling. It is the happiest hour of my life. And are you compensated for having waited these long weary years?"

"Yes, Frank; I am more than repaid. I am indeed happy. To know that you are with me — to see you with my own eyes — to feel that I hold you in my embrace — and share the felicity of this meeting, is a joy too extravagant, almost, to be real. O day of thanksgiving and praise. O day of rest and quietude."

Rap — rap — rap.

"Come in," said Graham, "come in." And instantly the family and guests gathered around the happy couple and extended to them their heartiest congratulations. Young Livingstone seemed wild over this "stupendous wonder," and declared it an infallible proof of his theory of preordination. It was a conspicuous example where fact had proven stranger than fiction. Nothing, he asserted, could excel the charm of the play or equal the adaptability of its characters. It was a comedy, cleverly got up, beautifully performed, and the principals deserved the highest encomiums for the conception of their

parts and the artistic grace which marked their deportment throughout the last and most trying scene. He declared that Graham should join his church as he had promised to do, and then make a speech. The peculiar scene witnessed at the dinner-table by every one present, together with the singular, if not dramatic, conclusion, seemed to him to require a little explanation which his friend he knew would be only too glad to make. When the balloon shall have been inflated, and the happy couple have taken their seats in the car which shall bear them up into the realms of celestial joys, no one present would look more proudly upon its ascension or wish the aeronauts a more lasting happiness than he.

Graham, upon rising to reply, thanked his friends for their cordial sympathy and good wishes, and assured his friend of his conversion to his faith. He then entertained the company with a recital of their early attachment and separation; of her belief in his death and her subsequent acceptance of a home with an uncle in Gloucester; of his own return and the story as told to him by the miller, and his belief in her marriage and departure for Calcutta; and finally concluding his brief review with the following story:—

“While we were working on Gold Flats in the old Corral,” he began, “an old sailor straggled into our claim and asked for work. He said he had no

tools, neither money with which to purchase them. We invited him down to our camp. Next day we set him to work cutting a ditch from a little gully to bring the water nearer our camps. That noon, while being served with dinner, he uncovered a sixteen pound lump of gold, and said: 'Messmates, I found this prize in the ditch yonder, and I suppose it rightfully belongs to me, but I found it on your camp grounds, and I did n't care to leave without first showing you the prize, and getting your full consent to take it away.' Now, friends, I have found a prize of inestimable value to me, but I found it, as I might say, upon your premises. I have no doubt but that it is mine, yet I feel like the old sailor, and don't care to leave without first showing you the prize, and asking you, not only for the right to take it away, but that you give me a written certificate which shall guaranty me a legal claim to it as long as I live. Friends, this is my prize. Let me take her away; for wheresoever I goeth thither will she also go, my friends shall be her friends, and my home her home. God hath brought us together, let no man put us asunder. Let us kill the fatted calf, and eat, drink, and be merry, for she that was lost is found, and he that was dead is alive again."

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